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LIVES
OF
ALEXANDER HENDERSON
AND
JAMES GUTHRIE.

WITH
SPECIMENS OF THEIR WRITINGS.

ISSUED BY THE COMMITTEE OF
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND
FOR THE PUBLICATION OF THE WORKS OF
SCOTTISH REFORMERS AND DIVINES.

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L I F E
OF
ALEXANDER HENDERSON.

BY THE LATE
REV. THOMAS M'CRIE, D.D.
AUTHOR OF LIFE OF JOHN KNOX, &c.

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THOSE transactions which have rendered the middle of the 17th century so famous in the history of Britain, aroused and drew forth to public view men of the most eminent talents, in the northern as well as the southern part of our island. Scotland could at that time boast of her patriots both in Church and State, inferior to those of no other nation ;—of statesmen, able, disinterested, enlightened, jealous of the rights of their country, and at the same time loyal to their prince ;—of ministers of religion, distinguished for learning and piety, and who counted nothing dear to them, provided that they might advance the kingdom of Christ, and secure their religious privileges. To that band of illustrious Reformers, who stood firm against the encroachments of tyranny and superstition, we owe, under God, whatever we enjoy most valuable in religion and liberty ; although justice is seldom done to their character and actings in the histories of that period, and their memories have often been

loaded with the most odious charges and libellous abuse. Among these, the subject of the following memoir held a conspicuous place; and the stations to which he was called, and the important services which he performed, give a high interest to his character, and to the particulars of his life.

ALEXANDER HENDERSON was born about the year 1583. Of his parents, or the circumstances of the early part of his life, no authentic information has descended to us. Being intended for the service of the Church, he was sent to the University of St Andrews to complete his education, about the commencement of the 17th century. His abilities and application soon distinguished him in literary improvement; and, after having finished the usual course of studies, and passed his degrees with applause, he was chosen teacher of a class of philosophy and rhetoric in that University.

The Church of Scotland had, at this period, suffered a great change. The liberty of her Assemblies was infringed; Episcopacy, with its attendant evils, obtruded upon her, and, to make way for these innovations, her most able and faithful ministers were banished, imprisoned, silenced, or driven into obscure and distant corners. Particular care was taken to poison the sources of learning, by placing the tuition of youth under the care of time-serving and corrupt men. The learned and intrepid Andrew Melville, who had presided over the College of St Andrews with great success and renown, was removed, detained, and at last finally excluded from his station, under the most deceitful pretexts, and persons placed in his room, and that of his colleagues, who were fit instru-

ments for disseminating such principles as were favourable to the corrupt measures then carrying on.

Mr Henderson being then a young man, and ambitious of preferment, became a warm advocate for the new measures. Though the authority is not the best, yet there is reason to think that what Bishop Guthrie says of him is not without foundation, that "being Professor of Philosophy in St Andrews, he did, at the Laureation of his class, choose Archbishop Gladstones for his patron, with a very flattering dedication, for which he had the Kirk of Leuchars given him shortly after." This may assist us in determining the time at which Mr Henderson entered into the ministry. As he received the parish through the patronage of Archbishop Gladstones, and as that prelate died in 1615, he must have entered on or before that year. His settlement at Leuchars, procured in the manner above mentioned, was unpopular to such a degree, that on the day of his ordination, the people secured the church-doors, and the ministers who attended, together with the presentee, were obliged to break in by the window. When a sober people discover such violent symptoms of dissatisfaction with a minister, there is reason to conclude that there is something wrong either with the candidate, or the manner of his introduction among them. In the present instance there were both. For the person who was appointed to take the oversight of them, not only was known to be a defender of those corruptions to which the great body of the people in Scotland were averse, but discovered little or no regard to the spiritual interests of the flock upon whom he had been obtruded. A most unhappy connection, which it is probable would only have continued until his interest had procured

him a change to a better living, had not every ground of dissatisfaction between him and his people been removed, and a foundation of lasting comfort between them laid in the merciful ordination of God. Mr Henderson had not continued long in Leuchars, when an important change was effected on the state of his mind,—a change which had an influence upon the whole of his future conduct.

About this time, that truly great man, Mr Robert Bruce, who had been banished from Edinburgh for refusing to comply with a mandate from the Court respecting the Gowrie conspiracy, and was driven from one part of the country to another, through the fears entertained from his opposition to the measures of the Court and bishops, had obtained liberty to return from Inverness, the place of his restraint. This interval of freedom he improved by preaching at different places to which he had access, and was followed by crowds, whom his piety, his talents, and his sufferings, drew together to hear him, particularly on fast-days and at communions. Hearing of a communion in the neighbourhood, at which Mr Bruce was expected to assist, Mr Henderson, attracted by his fame, or from some other motive, went thither secretly, and placed himself in a dark corner of the church, where he would remain most concealed. Mr Bruce came into the pulpit, and after a pause, according to his usual manner, which fixed Mr Henderson's attention on him, he read, with his accustomed emphasis and deliberation, these words as his text, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is A THIEF AND A ROBBER." Words so descriptive of the character of an intruder, and so literally

applicable to the manner in which he entered upon his ministry at Leuchars, went like “drawn swords” to the heart of Mr Henderson. He who wished to conceal himself from all, felt that he was naked and opened to the word of God, the secrets of his heart were made manifest, his conscience convicted, and, yielding to the force of divine truth, “he worshipped God, and, going away, reported, that God was of a truth” in those whose ways were so opposite to his own. In one word, the discourse of that powerful preacher on this occasion, was, by the Divine blessing, the means of Mr Henderson’s conversion. Ever after he retained a great affection for his spiritual father, Mr Bruce, and used to make mention of him with marks of the highest respect.

We need not doubt that Mr Henderson’s change of mind would soon discover itself in his conduct, and that he would strive by all means in his power to promote the edification of the people of his charge, and to remove the offence which he had caused by the manner of his first entrance among them. Let us hear himself speaking on this subject, in his address to his brethren in the famous Assembly at Glasgow, more than twenty years after the period of which we now speak. “There are divers among us that have had no such warrant for our entry to the ministry, as were to be wished. Alas ! how many of us have rather sought the kirk, than the kirk sought us ! How many have rather gotten the kirk given to them, than they have been given to the kirk for the good thereof ! And yet there must be a great difference put between these that have lived many years in an unlawful office, without warrant of God, and therefore must be abominable in the sight of God, and those

who in some respects have entered unlawfully, and with an ill conscience, and afterwards have come to see the evil of this, and to do what in them lies to repair the injury. The one is like a marriage altogether unlawful, and null in itself; the other is like a marriage in some respects unlawful and inexpedient, but that may be mended by the diligence and fidelity of the parties in doing their duty afterwards; so should it be with us who entered lately into the calling of the ministry. If there were any faults or wrong steps in our entry, (as who of us are free?) acknowledge the Lord's calling of us, if we have since got a seal from Heaven of our ministry, and let us labour with diligence and faithfulness in our office."

A concern about personal religion, and the salvation of the souls of men, has often led to a concern about the prerogatives of the King of Zion, as connected with the external government of his Church. This was exemplified in Mr Henderson. He began to look upon the courses of the prevailing party in the Church of Scotland with a different eye from what he had done formerly, when he was guided by a worldly spirit, and by views of ambition. Their tendency he perceived to be injurious to the interests of practical religion. He, however, judged it proper to give the existing controversy a deliberate investigation, the result of which was, that he found Episcopacy to be equally unauthorised by the Word of God, and inconsistent with the reformed constitution of the Church of Scotland.

He did not long want an opportunity of publicly declaring his change of views, and of appearing on the side of that cause which he had hitherto discountenanced. From the time that the prelatie govern-

ment had first been obtruded upon the Church of Scotland, a plan had been laid to conform her worship also to the English model. After various preparatory steps, an Assembly was suddenly indicted at Perth, in the year 1618, in which, by the most undue influence, a number of superstitious innovations were authorised. Among those ministers who had the courage to oppose these innovations, and who argued against them with great force of truth, but without success, we find the name of Mr Alexander Henderson of Leuchars. It is remarkable, that it was proposed in this Assembly, that he and his friend; Mr William Scot of Coupar, should be translated to Edinburgh. This proposal, there is the best reason for supposing, was made with the view of soothing the inhabitants of that city, and of procuring a more ready submission to the other acts of that Assembly, without any serious intention of settling these able advocates for nonconformity in that station. "The bishops," says Calderwood, "meant no such thing in earnest." But the proposal testifies the esteem in which Mr Henderson was held, even at that early period, by the faithful part of the Church of Scotland, unto whom he had lately adjoined himself.

In the month of August 1619, Mr Henderson and two other ministers were called before the Court of High Commission in St Andrews, charged with composing and publishing a book, entitled "Perth Assembly," proving the nullity of that Assembly, and with raising a contribution to defray the expense of printing the work. They appeared, and answered for themselves with such wisdom, that the bishops could gain no advantage against them, and were obliged to dismiss them with threatenings. Both be-

fore and after the ratification of the Acts of Perth Assembly by the Parliament in 1621, many honest ministers were greatly harassed on account of their nonconformity. But the aversion to the newly introduced ceremonies was so general, and the minority against whose will they were carried, both in Assembly and Parliament, so respectable, that it was judged impolitic and dangerous to enforce a rigid and universal compliance with them. A number of ministers, who opposed and refused to practise them, were overlooked, and permitted to continue in their charges, particularly in the west country, and in Fife, where Mr Henderson's parish lay. From this period until the year 1637, it does not appear that he suffered much, although he continued to be watched with a jealous eye, and cramped in his exertions for promoting the cause of truth and holiness.

One feels a desire to know how a person in Mr Henderson's situation was employed during so long an interval of partial restraint; and even when the records from which information is drawn are in a great measure silent, we may, without transgressing far the limits of history, form conclusions from the character of the man, and the appearance which he made when afterwards drawn into public notice. Secluded from the bustle of the world, he had an opportunity of conversing with his God, and of being admitted to those heavenly enjoyments, and attaining those religious experiences, which are often, in a high degree, the privileges of Christians placed in such circumstances.

The time which Mr Henderson spent in his retirement, though obscure on the page of history, was not the least useful period of his life. Living sequestered

in his parish, and excluded from taking any share in the management of the ecclesiastical affairs of the nation, he had leisure to push his inquiries into the extensive field of theology and the history of the Church, and laid up those stores of knowledge which he afterwards had an opportunity of displaying. The sedulous discharge of pastoral duties afforded him regular employment, and in the success with which this was attended, he enjoyed the purest gratification. Besides this, he met occasionally with his brethren of the same mind at fasts and communions, when, by sermons and conferences, they encouraged one another in adhering to the good old principles of the Church of Scotland, and joined in fervent supplications to God for the remedy of those evils under which they groaned. Mr Livingston mentions Mr Henderson as one of those "godly and able ministers" with whom he got acquainted in attending these solemn occasions, between the years 1626 and 1630, "the memory of whom," says he, "is very precious and refreshing."

At length the time for delivering the Church of Scotland arrived. The Lord regarded the prayers and fasting of his servants, made their light to rise out of obscurity, and restored their captivity in an unexpected and surprising way. Those who had become enamoured with the external form of the English Church, judged, in concurrence with the court, that a fit season now offered for introducing its complete model into Scotland. Accordingly, in 1636, a book of ecclesiastical canons was sent down from England, and in the course of the same year a book of ordination. After some delay, the Anglo-Popish Liturgy or Service-book, framed after the English model, but with alterations, which, according to the

scheme then on foot of reconciling the Romish and English churches, approached nearer to the Popish ritual, made its appearance. Had Scotland tamely submitted to this yoke, and allowed the threefold cord to be thrown over her, she might afterwards have sighed and struggled in vain for liberty. But the arbitrary manner in which these innovations were imposed, not less offensive than the matter of them, added to the dissatisfaction produced by former measures of the court and bishops, excited universal disgust, and aroused a spirit of opposition, which was not allayed until not only the obnoxious acts were swept away, but the whole fabric of Episcopacy, which during so many years they had laboured to rear, was levelled with the dust. Sensible of gross mismanagements, and galled with disappointment, the defenders of Scottish Episcopacy have endeavoured to throw the blame sometimes on the young bishops, sometimes upon the statesmen employed in the transaction ; but it is evident, that, while their counsels were in some things divided, they did all, young and old, churchmen and statesmen, urge forward, with singular infatuation, those measures which precipitated their fall.

The tumult which was produced by the first reading of the Liturgy in Edinburgh, on the 23d of July 1637, is well known. Bishop Guthrie represents this disturbance as the result of a previous consultation in April, at which time, he says, Mr Alexander Henderson came from the brethren in Fife, and Mr David Dickson from those in the west, and, in concert with Lord Balmerino and Sir Thomas Hope, engaged certain matrons to put the first affront upon the Service-book. The bishop was so well acquainted with this

piece of secret history, that he has given us the names of the women employed. It is rather unfavourable to the credibility of this story, that it flatly contradicts the official accounts, not only of the Town Council of Edinburgh, and of the Privy Council, but of his Majesty also, which declare, that, after the most strict inquiry, it appeared that the tumult was begun by the meaner sort of people, without any instigation, concert, or interference, of the better classes. But the bishop himself, in his eagerness to asperse Mr Dickson, has mentioned a fact which enables us completely to disprove the charge, and which discredits his whole account. He says that Mr Dickson, in going home by Stirling, gave out that his errand to Edinburgh was to accompany Mr Robert Blair to a ship which was to carry him to Germany. Now, Mr Blair's design of going to the Continent was not *before*, but a considerable time *after* the tumult, being formed in the midst of the regular opposition which was made to the innovations, and at a time when there was little appearance of the petitioners obtaining a favourable answer to their demands.

But although Mr Henderson had no share in any private cabal or plot, he had, from the first intimation of the projected changes, expressed his disapprobation of them, and did not scruple, after their appearance, publicly to expose their dangerous tendency. While this irritated the ruling party, it endeared him to others. As early as March 1637, we find Mr Rutherford thus writing to him:—"As for your case, my reverend and dearest brother, ye are the talking of the north and of the south, and looked to so as if ye were all chrystal glass. Your moes and dust should [will] be proclaimed, and trumpets blown at your

slips ; but I know ye have laid help upon One that is mighty. Intrust not your comforts to men's airy and frothy applause, neither lay your downcastings on the tongues of salt-mockers, and reproachers of godliness." His early and public appearances were the occasion of his being singled out among the objects of prosecution, to deter others from imitating their example. The Archbishop of St Andrews gave a charge to Mr Henderson and other two ministers in his diocese, to purchase each two copies of the Liturgy, for the use of their parishes, within fifteen days, under the pain of rebellion. Mr Henderson immediately came to Edinburgh, and on the 23d of August, presented a petition to the Privy Council for himself and his brethren, stating their objections, and praying a suspension of the charge. To this petition, and others of a similar kind, providentially presented about the same time, the council returned a favourable answer, and transmitted to London an account of the aversion of the country to conformity. This was an important step, as it directed all that were aggrieved to a regular mode of obtaining relief ; and the Privy Council having, at this early stage, testified their aversion to enforce the novations, did afterwards, on different important occasions, befriend and promote the cause of the petitioners.

From this time forward, Mr Henderson took an active share in all the measures of the petitioners, and his prudence and diligence contributed not a little to bring them to a happy issue. They soon discovered his value, and improved it by employing him in their most important and delicate transactions. Indeed, he was engaged with so little intermission in the public transactions which followed, that the history

of the remaining part of his life necessarily involves some account of these. Without, however, entering into a detail of public events, which may be found in the general histories of the period, although often very inadequately and partially represented, it shall be the object of this memoir to select those incidents in which Mr Henderson was more particularly concerned, and which tend to throw light upon his character.

As we are now to view him in a very different scene from the tranquil and retiring one in which he formerly acted, it may be agreeable to hear his own beautiful and serious reflections upon the ordinations of divine sovereignty in this matter, made when he was in London, in the midst of those great undertakings to which Providence had gradually conducted him. "When," says he, "from my sense of myself, and of my own thoughts and ways, I begin to remember how men, who love to live obscurely, and in the shadow, are brought forth to light, to the view and talking of the world; how men that love quietness are made to stir, and to have a hand in public business; how men that love soliloquies and contemplations are brought upon debates and controversies; and generally, how men are brought to act the things which they never determined, nor so much as dreamed of before;—the words of the prophet Jeremiah come to my remembrance, 'O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.' Let no man think himself master of his own actions or ways: 'When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, another shall gird thee, and carry

thee whither thou wouldst not.' " These reflections show that in the active part which he took in the troubles, he was neither goaded by resentment for the restraints to which he had been subjected, nor stimulated by that ambition which leads men to seek for fame in the embroilments of public affairs,—a remark which the whole of his subsequent life serves to justify.

The number of the petitioners against the innovations increased so rapidly, that in a short time the body of the nation was embarked in the cause, and they found it necessary to divide themselves into four companies, consisting of the noblemen, the gentlemen of the shires, the burgesses, and the ministers, and to commit the prosecution of their petitions to a certain number of deputies, or commissioners, appointed by each of these; which was done with the approbation of the Privy Council. After having been amused for some time with promises, their meetings were suddenly prohibited by a proclamation from his Majesty, under pain of rebellion. Alarmed by this procedure, and convinced that they could not confide in the court, they saw the necessity of adopting some other method for strengthening their union. That to which they were directed was, both in a divine and human point of view, the most proper. They recollected, that formerly, in a time of great danger, the nation of Scotland had entered into a solemn covenant, by which they bound themselves to continue in the true Protestant religion, and to defend and support one another in that cause against their common enemies. The several Tables being assembled, the noblemen having called Messrs Henderson and Dickson to their assistance, agreed to renew this covenant, and

approved of a draught for this purpose. This being sent to the other Tables, was unanimously adopted. It was substantially the same with the National Covenant, which had been sworn by all ranks, and ratified by every authority in the kingdom during the preceding reign, but was adapted to the corruptions which had been introduced since that period, and to the circumstances in which the Covenanters were placed, in which respect it differed from what was called the King's Covenant, afterwards enjoined. On the 1st of March 1638, the covenant was sworn with uplifted hands, and subscribed in the Greyfriars' Church, by thousands, consisting of the nobility, gentry, burgesses, ministers of the Gospel, and commons, assembled from all parts of Scotland; and copies of it being circulated throughout the kingdom, it was every where sworn and subscribed with the greatest alacrity. "This memorable deed, of which it would be improper to forget the authors, was prepared by Alexander Henderson, the leader of the clergy, and Archibald Johnston, afterwards of Warriston, an advocate, in whom the suppliants chiefly confided, and revised by Balmerino, Loudon, and Rothes."

About this time the city of Edinburgh fixed their eyes upon Mr Henderson for one of their ministers. Among other articles of information sent up to the Scottish bishops then at London, by their friends in Scotland, was the following:—"That the Council of Edinburgh have made choice of Mr Alexander Henderson to be helper to Mr Andrew Ramsay, and intend to admit him without advice or consent of the bishops." It is probable that his own aversion to be translated, which he afterwards discovered to be very strong, and the desire of the petitioners not to

throw any unnecessary obstacle in the way of the settlement, were the causes which hindered the motion from being carried into effect at this time.

In the month of July, Mr Henderson, together with Mr Dickson, was sent by the Tables to the north, to persuade the inhabitants to take the covenant, particularly those of Aberdeen, who, by the influence of their doctors of divinity, and the Marquis of Huntly, had hitherto declined to join with their brethren in other parts of the nation. Upon their arrival at Aberdeen, the doctors presented to them fourteen captious demands respecting the covenant, which they had drawn up with much care and art. Different papers passed between the doctors and the deputed ministers on this subject, which were published. Those of the latter were written by Mr Henderson. The deputies being otherwise engaged, and seeing no prospect of removing the prejudices of men who had adopted principles which led them to comply with whatever the Court should enjoin, desisted from the controversy, and left it to be carried on by individuals through the press. Being refused access to the pulpits of Aberdeen, they preached to great crowds of people in the open air. Many were disposed to mock; but the only outrage which took place, was committed by a student, named Logie, a profligate youth, who threw stones at the Commissioners while Mr Henderson was preaching; and who, shortly after, was found guilty of the murder of a boy, and executed. After preaching in various places, and procuring the subscriptions of several hundreds in Aberdeen, besides those in different parts of the country, they returned to their constituents.

The next public appearance which Mr Henderson

was called to make, was in the celebrated Assembly which met at Glasgow. The petitioners continuing firm and united, the Court found it necessary to grant their demands, by calling a General Assembly and Parliament, to consider the grievances of which the nation complained. The first thing that engaged the attention of the Assembly, which sat down on the 21st November 1638, was the choice of a Moderator. Considering the critical state of affairs, the period which had elapsed since a General Assembly had been held in Scotland, the important discussions expected, and the multitude assembled to witness them, the filling of this station in a proper manner was of great consequence. It required a person of authority, resolution, and prudence,—one who could act in a difficult situation in which he had not formerly been placed. Mr Henderson had given evidence of his possessing these qualifications in a high degree, and he was unanimously called to the chair. Having solemnly constituted the Assembly, he addressed the members in a neat and appropriate speech. Throughout the whole of that Assembly he justified the good opinion which his brethren entertained of him. To his Majesty's Commissioner he behaved with the greatest respect, and, at the same time, with an independence and firmness which became the president of a free Assembly. His behaviour to the nobility and gentry, who were members, and to his brethren in the ministry, was equally decorous. His prudence and ability were put to the test on two occasions,—the premature dissolution of the Assembly by the royal Commissioner, and the excommunication of the bishops. Of his conduct in these, it is proper to give some account.

Although the King had called the Assembly, it was not his design to allow them fairly to proceed to the discussion of ecclesiastical business, and to examine and rectify abuses, but only to cause to be registered such concessions, flowing from his own will and authority, as he found it necessary in present circumstances to grant. The Marquis of Hamilton, his Commissioner, had instructions not to consent formally to any part of their procedure, and, at a proper time, to oppose a nullity to the whole. On the other hand, the members considered themselves as a free Assembly, and were resolved to claim and exercise that liberty and power which they possessed, agreeably to Presbyterian principles, and the laws of the land ratifying the Presbyterian government, and the freedom of its judicatories. The declinature of the bishops having been read, at the repeated request of the Commissioner, the Assembly were proceeding in course to vote themselves competent judges of the libels raised against them. Upon this, the Commissioner interposed, and declared that if they proceeded to this, he could continue with them no longer, and delivered his Majesty's concessions to be read and registered. After the clerk had read them, the Moderator addressed his Grace in a grave and well-digested speech. He returned thanks, in the name of the Assembly, for his Majesty's goodness in calling the Assembly, and the willingness to remove the grievances complained of, which he had testified in the paper now read. He condescended upon the power which the Reformed Churches allowed to magistrates respecting ecclesiastical affairs, and declared that the Assembly were heartily disposed to give unto their King and his Commissioner, all that honour and

obedience which was consistent with the duty they owed to the King of kings. "Sir," answered the Commissioner, "you have spoken as becometh a good Christian and a dutiful subject, and I am hopeful that you will conduct yourself with that deference you owe to your royal Sovereign, all of whose commands will (I trust) be found agreeable to the commandments of God." The Moderator replied, that being indicted by his Majesty, and constituted according to the acts and practice of former times, they looked upon themselves as a free Assembly; and he trusted that all things would be conducted agreeably to the laws of God and reason, and hoped that their king, being such a lover of righteousness, would, upon a proper representation, cordially agree with them. Having said this, he asked the members again if he should put the question as to the competency of the Assembly to judge the bishops? The Commissioner urged that the question should be deferred. "Nay, with your Grace's permission, that cannot be," said the Moderator; "for it is fit to be only after the declinature hath been under consideration." The Commissioner repeated, that in this case it behoved him to withdraw. "I wish the contrary from the bottom of my heart," replied Mr Henderson, "and that your Grace would continue to favour us with your presence, without obstructing the work and freedom of the Assembly." After having in vain insisted on the Moderator to conclude with prayer, the Commissioner did, in his Majesty's name, dissolve the Assembly, discharging them, under the highest pains, from continuing to sit longer.

Upon the Commissioner's leaving the house, the Moderator delivered an animating address to the As-

sembly. He reminded them of the Divine countenance which had hitherto been shown to them in the midst of their greatest difficulties. They had done all that was in their power to obtain the countenance of human authority, and now, when deprived of it, they ought not to be discouraged in maintaining the rights which they had received from Christ, as a court constituted in his name. "We perceive," said he, "his Grace, my Lord Commissioner, to be zealous of his royal master's commands; have not we as good reason to be zealous towards our Lord, and to maintain the liberties and privileges of his kingdom?" Immediately after this, upon the Moderator's putting the question, the members did, first by uplifted hands, and then by a formal vote, declare their resolution to remain together until they finished the weighty business which urgently demanded their consideration.

At the opening of the next session, Mr Henderson again addressed the Assembly, and put them in mind of the propriety of their paying particular attention, in the circumstances in which they were now placed, to gravity, quietness, and order; not, he said, that he assumed anything to himself, but he was bold to direct them in that wherein he knew he had the consent of their own minds. It is but justice to add, that this advice was punctually complied with throughout the whole of that long Assembly.

The Assembly having finished the processes of the bishops, agreed, at the close of their 19th session, that the sentences passed against them should be publicly pronounced next day by the Moderator, after a sermon to be preached by him suitable to the solemn occasion. It was in vain that he pleaded his fatigue, the multiplicity of affairs by which his attention was distracted,

and the shortness of the advertisement with a view to preparation : no excuse was admitted. Accordingly, at the time appointed, he preached, before a very large auditory, from Psalm cx. 1 : “ The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” After narrating the steps which the Assembly had taken, and causing an abstract of the evidence against the bishops to be read for the satisfaction of the people, he, “ in a very dreadful and grave manner” (says one who was present), pronounced the sentences of deposition and excommunication; the whole Assembly being deeply affected, and filled with mingled emotions of admiration, pity, and awe.

On the day following, a petition from St Andrews was presented to the Assembly, supplicating that Mr Henderson should be translated to that city. This was opposed by the Commissioners from Edinburgh, who pleaded that he was already their minister-elect. Mr Henderson himself was extremely averse to remove from his present charge, and keenly opposed it in the Assembly. He pleaded that he was too old a plant to take root in another soil, and that he might be more useful where he was than in a public station. If he was to be removed, his love of retirement inclined him rather to St Andrews than Edinburgh. After a warm contest between the two places, it carried that he should be translated to Edinburgh. Upon this decision of the Assembly, he submitted, having obtained a promise that he should be allowed to remove to a country charge, if his health should require it, or when the infirmities of old age should overtake him.

When the Assembly had brought their business to

a conclusion, Mr Henderson addressed them in an able speech of considerable length ; of which we can here only present an outline. He apologised for the imperfect manner in which he had discharged the duties of the situation in which they had placed him, and thanked them for rendering his task so easy by the manner in which they had conducted themselves ; exhorted them gratefully to remember the wonderful goodness of the Almighty, and not to overlook the instances of favour which they had received from their temporal sovereign. He adverted to the galling yoke from which they had been rescued ; pointed out some of the visible marks of the finger of God in effecting this ; and earnestly exhorted them to a discreet use and steady maintenance of the liberties which they had obtained. “ We are like a man that has lain long in irons, who, after they are off, and he redeemed, feels not his liberty for some time, but the smart of them makes him apprehend that they are on him still : so it is with us ; we do not yet feel our liberty. Take heed of a second defection ; and rather endure the greatest extremity, than be entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” In conclusion, he inculcated upon them a favourable construction of his Majesty’s opposition to them ; expressed his high sense of the distinguished part which the nobles, barons, and burgesses had acted, of the harmony which had reigned among the ministers, and of the kind and hospitable treatment which the members of Assembly had received from the city of Glasgow. After desiring some members to supply any thing which he had omitted, he concluded with prayer, singing the 133d Psalm, and pronouncing the apostolical benediction. Upon which the Assembly rose in triumph. “ We

have now cast down the walls of Jericho," said Mr Henderson, when the members were rising; "let him that rebuildeth them beware of the curse of Hiel the Bethelite."

The distinguished place which Mr Henderson occupied in this Assembly, and the active part which he took in its proceedings, could not fail, notwithstanding the propriety and moderation of his conduct, to expose him to the resentment of the court and bishops. In the "Large Declaration," drawn up by Dr Balcanqual, and published in the king's name, he is called "the prime and most rigid Covenanter in the kingdom." Archbishop Laud, in a letter to the Marquis of Hamilton, says, that the only thing, in the full accounts sent him of the proceedings of the Assembly, which required an answer, was, "That Mr Alexander Henderson, who went all this while for a quiet and calm-spirited man, hath shewn himself a most violent and passionate man, and a moderator without moderation." Nor was the primate at any loss to account for this transformation of the lamb into the lion; for he adds, "Truly, my Lord, never did I see any man of that humour (the Presbyterian), but he was deep-dyed in some violence or other; and it would have been a wonder to me if Henderson had held free." Meek-eyed and merciful Prelacy! thou hast ever inspired thy votaries with moderation. The proceedings of the High Commission and Star Chamber will continue to bear witness, that their voice was never disgraced by rude passion, nor their hand stained with violence or blood! The censures of men disappointed in the mad project of subjugating a whole nation under tyranny and superstition, will be regarded as praises by all good Christians and patriots. A short

time after this, Laud and Balcanqual were declared "public incendiaries" by the King and the Parliaments of both kingdoms; while Mr Henderson was honoured by them, and his conduct vindicated as laudable and patriotic.

Whilst his countrymen were making preparations, during the winter 1639, for defending themselves against the hostile invasion from England, Mr Henderson's pen was employed in several publications, in vindication of their proceedings. Among other papers, he drew up "The Remonstrance of the Nobility, &c., within the kingdom of Scotland, vindicating them and their proceedings from the crimes wherewith they are charged by the late proclamation in England, Feb. 27, 1639," which paper, after being revised by the deputies, was published and circulated in England, and was of great advantage to their cause in that country. He also drew up "Instructions for defensive arms," intended to give information to all among themselves respecting the just and necessary grounds of the defensive war into which they were forced. As this was hastily composed, and the subject was delicate, he declined making it public; but one Corbet, a deposed minister, who fled to Ireland, carried a copy along with him, and published it with an answer.

As it contains a vindication of the conduct of the nation in that important affair, and of himself in the share which he took in it, a short view of its contents may not be improper here. The question he states, with great accuracy, to be, Whether or not the body of a nation, with the nobles, counsellors, barons, and burgesses, owning all just subjection to the supreme magistrate, and only seeking the enjoyment of their religion and liberties established and solemnly gua-

ranted to them, have a right to stand on their defence against a king, who, at a distance from his people, and misled by the misinformation and malice of evil counsellors, invades them at the head of a foreign force, to overturn their laws, and bring ruin upon themselves and their posterity? That they have such a right, and that it is their duty to use it, he argues from the absurdities of the doctrine of non-resistance; from the doctrine of Scripture and reason regarding the end of magistracy; the line of subordination in which prince and people are placed; the covenant-bond of both king and people to God; the contract between the sovereign and his subjects; the law of self-preservation and defence in other cases; Scripture examples; the testimonies of the most judicious writers; and similar cases in other reformed countries.

The King being induced, by the determined appearance of the Scots (at Dunse Law), and the coldness which the English manifested in the cause, to listen to overtures for a pacification, Mr Henderson was appointed one of the Commissioners on the part of his countrymen. He and Mr Archibald Johnston declined going to the English camp with the rest of the Commissioners on the first day of the treaty; but being informed that his Majesty took notice of their absence, they repaired to it on the following day. The King and his English counsellors expressed their great esteem for Mr Henderson, who, throughout the whole of the treaty, and particularly in his speeches to his Majesty, displayed wisdom, eloquence, and loyalty.

Bishop Burnet has remarked, that it was strange to see Mr Henderson, who had acted so vigorously against the bishops for meddling with civil affairs,

made a Commissioner for this treaty, and sign a paper so purely civil as the pacification was. This is one of those reflections which appear plausible and acute at first view, but which a comparison of the two cases will discover to be groundless. Not to mention that the present was an extraordinary conjuncture, in which all that was dear to a people was at stake, and when it was proper that all their talents should be called forth and employed, it is evident that religion had been the principal cause of the quarrel, and that its interests were deeply concerned in the termination to which it might be brought. And although the articles of the pacification mentioned only the disbanding of the forces, yet it is well known, that these proceeded upon the King's declaration, engaging that all matters ecclesiastical should be determined by the Assemblies of the Church; that General Assemblies should be called once a year; and that one should be convened in August to settle the present differences. When these things are considered, the presence of one of the ministry, who could explain any point of difficulty, and watch over the rights of the Church, may easily be vindicated. But this is *toto cælo* different from bishops sitting as Lords of Parliament, or filling the highest offices of State, which, besides other evils, render it impossible for them to attend to the important duties of their ecclesiastical function.

Mr Henderson was one of the fourteen chief persons among the Covenanters who were sent for by the King to meet him at Berwick, after the Scottish army was disbanded. But an alarm having spread of a design against their life or liberty, they were stopped at the Watergate of Edinburgh, when they were set-

ting out on their journey, by the populace, who took their horses from them, and obliged them to return ; nor was it judged prudent that they should afterwards proceed : a measure which gave great offence to his Majesty.

At the opening of the General Assembly, which met at Edinburgh, August 12, 1639, Mr Henderson preached from Acts iv. 23 ; and in the conclusion of his discourse, addressed suitable exhortations to the royal Commissioner (the Earl of Traquair), and to the members of the Assembly. “ We beseech your Grace,” he said, “ to see that Cæsar have his own ; but let not Cæsar have what is due to God, and belongs to him. God has exalted your Grace to many high places within these few years, and more especially now. Be thankful, and labour to exalt Christ’s throne. Some are exalted like Haman,—some like Mordecai. And I pray God these good parts the Lord has endued you withal, you may use aright, as the Israelites, when they came out of Egypt, did give all their silver and gold for the building of the tabernacle, and you, right honourable, worshipful, and reverend members of this Assembly, go on in your zeal constantlie. Surely it shall be a refreshment to you and your children, that you should have lived when the light of the Gospel was almost extinguished, and now to see it quickened again. After all these troubles, with a holy moderation, go on ; for zeal is a good servant, but an ill master ; like a ship that has a full sail, and wants a rudder. We have need of Christian prudence ; for ye know what ill speeches our adversaries have made upon us. Let it be seen to his Majesty, that this (presbyterial) government can very well stand with a monarchical government.

Hereby we shall gain his Majesty's favour, and God shall get the glory; to whom be praise for ever and ever. Amen." The Commissioner earnestly requested that the former Moderator should be continued in the chair, out of respect to Mr Henderson's abilities, as he protested, but rather, as was suspected, to support his Majesty's pretensions to the right of nominating the person who should occupy that place, and of continuing him in it at pleasure. But this was opposed by the members of Assembly, and by none more than Mr Henderson himself, who urged, that it favoured the practice of *constant Moderator*, which in former times had been employed as an introduction to Prelacy. On the 31st of August, Mr Henderson preached an excellent sermon, at the opening of the Parliament, from 1st Tim. ii. 1-3, in which he treated of the end, utility, and duties of magistracy.

In the year 1640, he was placed at the head of the University of Edinburgh, by the Town-Council of that city. They had been accustomed to visit the College annually, which made the rector remiss in the discharge of his office. They now resolved, instead of these periodical visitations, to choose a rector annually, and to ascertain more precisely the powers of his office, by instructions framed for that end. Agreeably to this resolution, they "chose Mr Alexander Henderson, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, rector of the University, ordaining a silver mace to be borne before him on all solemnities, and appointing certain members of the Town-Council, ministers of Edinburgh, and professors in College, his assessors." They empowered him to superintend all matters connected with the conduct of the principal and professors, the education of youth, the revenues, &c.; to

admonish offenders, and in case of obstinacy, to make a report to the Town-Council. In this office, which he appears to have enjoyed, by re-election, to his death, he exerted himself sedulously to promote the interests of that learned seminary.

From the superintendence of this peaceful seat of literature, and from his pastoral functions, Mr Henderson was again reluctantly called by a new embroilment of public affairs. The King, yielding to the importunate solicitations of the Episcopal clergy, had refused, notwithstanding his promise at the late pacification, to ratify the conclusions of the Assembly and Parliament, suddenly prorogued the latter, denounced the Scots as rebels, and prepared again to invade the country. But the success of the Scottish army, who entered England in August 1640, necessitated him a second time to accede to pacific proposals: and a treaty to this effect was begun at Rippon, which in a short time after this was transferred to London. Mr Henderson was appointed one of the Commissioners for this treaty. It was on this occasion that the foundation was laid of that conjunction in religion as well as civil amity, between Scotland and England, which was afterwards solemnly ratified and sworn; and just and enlarged views of the state of public matters which produced this, and of the reasons upon which those who established it proceeded, are requisite in order to form a proper judgment of the public measures which were afterwards pursued by the friends of religion and liberty in the three kingdoms, as well as to vindicate the subject of this memoir for the part which he acted in them. But, sensible of the difficulty of conveying an adequate idea of the subject, within the limits to which he is confined, the memorialist

enters not here upon this field. Suffice it to say, that upon a retrospective view of the state of the Scottish Church, her friends perceived that she had been exposed to perpetual danger, from the encroachments of her powerful neighbour. Her peace had been interrupted, and the spiritual government and worship which she had embraced, and solemnly sworn to maintain, had been repeatedly infringed and overturned, to make way for the more pompous, but superstitious form of the English Church. They perceived a concerted plan between the Court and English bishops, persisted in, and often renewed, to obtrude the hierarchy and ceremonies upon them. To this they could easily trace the late innovations which had so much distracted the kingdom of Scotland. They had been denounced as rebels from all the pulpits of the hierarchical clergy in England, who had twice, within two years, instigated his Majesty to make war against Scotland, and had contributed so liberally to raise the armies destined for subduing that country, that it was called, even in England, *The Bishops' War*. On these grounds, the Scots saw little rational prospect of their being long allowed peaceably to enjoy their religious privileges, while the English hierarchy retained its power. At this time, too, multitudes in England, who were sensible of the corruptions, and groaned under the tyranny of their ecclesiastical government, earnestly desired reformation, and had given in petitions to the Supreme Court for the abolition of the hierarchy. And the Parliament, which was sitting at London during the time of the Treaty, had, with great zeal, taken measures for the reformation both of government and worship. In these circumstances, the Scottish Commissioners, according to

instructions from their constituents, gave in a proposal for “unity in religion, and uniformity in Church government, as a special means for conserving of peace between the two kingdoms.” At the same time, they delivered to the English Commissioners a paper drawn up by Mr Henderson, which stated very forcibly the grounds of this proposal, and condescended upon a mode of carrying it into effect, which paper was transmitted to the English Parliament. To the above demand a favourable answer was returned by the King and Parliament, signifying in general, that they approved of the affection expressed by the Scots in their desire, and that, “as the Parliament had taken into consideration the reformation of Church government, so they will proceed therein in due time ;” which answer was ratified as one of the articles of the Treaty.

During the whole time that he was in London attending on the Treaty, which was protracted through nine months, Mr Henderson was laboriously employed. Besides taking his turn with his brethren, who attended as chaplains to the Scottish Commissioners, in the church of St Antholine’s, which was assigned unto them as a place of public worship, he and they were often employed in preaching for the London ministers, both on Sabbath and on other days. He prepared several tracts for the press, which were published without his name. The polishing of the most important papers of the Scottish Commissioners was committed to him, before they were given in to the Commissioners and Parliament of England. Those which respected religion were of his composition.

During his stay in London, Mr Henderson had a private conference with the king, the special object of which was to procure assistance to the University

in Scotland, from the rents formerly appropriated to the bishops. He was graciously received, and got reason to expect that his request would be complied with.

Mr Henderson returned to Edinburgh about the end of July 1641. The General Assembly had met at St Andrews some days before; but as the Parliament who were sitting in Edinburgh, had sent to request them to translate themselves to that place, for the convenience of those who were members of both, and as they wished that Mr Henderson, who had not then returned from London, should act as Moderator of this meeting, the members agreed that they should meet at Edinburgh on the 27th of July, and that the former Moderator should preside until that time. Mr Henderson had been elected a member of this Assembly; but, as it was uncertain if he could be present, his constituents had elected Mr Fairfoul to supply his place in case of his absence, and he had taken his seat at St Andrews. Upon Mr Henderson's arrival, Mr Fairfoul proposed to give place to him. This was keenly opposed by Mr Calderwood, who insisted that his commission could not now be received; in which he was seconded by Mr Henderson himself. But the Assembly sustained his commission, and although he deprecated the burden of moderating, this also was, by a plurality of votes, laid upon him. Mr Calderwood continued to insist upon the great irregularity of translating the Assembly without a permanent Moderator, and of choosing one to this seat who had no commissson. But although, in the judgment of the greater part of the members, he spoke unreasonably and peevishly, Mr Henderson treated him with great respect and patience. Instead of resenting his

opposition as personal, he, previous to the dissolution of this Assembly, publicly expressed his regret that Mr Calderwood, who had deserved so well of this Church, had been so long neglected, and procured a recommendation of him by the Assembly, in consequence of which he was soon afterwards admitted to the church of Pencaitland.

The chief business which engaged the attention of the Assembly at this meeting, and on account of which Mr Henderson's abilities in the moderation were desired, was the affair of private meetings, the discussion of which threatened to raise dissension among the ministers. Some persons who were tainted with Brownistical and Independent notions, had insinuated themselves into those private societies for religious exercises which had been kept by serious persons, both in Scotland and Ireland, during the tyranny of the bishops, and had introduced some of their peculiarities into them. A number of the ministers who had witnessed the extravagancies of the Separatists, and were afraid that division and errors might thus creep into the Church, were desirous to restrain these meetings. Others, among whom were those ministers who had seen the benefit of private societies in the West of Scotland, and in Ireland, suspected that some designed to condemn all private meetings for Christian edification. In the Assembly held in Aberdeen the preceding year, the affair had been discussed, not without considerable heat. Mr Henderson, sensible of abuses in these societies, had repeatedly expressed his dissatisfaction with them; on which account he was at first misunderstood by some of his brethren, and met with disrespectful usage from certain individuals who were inclined to "the disci-

pline of New England," as Independency was then termed. But the whole of his conduct showed that he was desirous only of correcting the perversions of these meetings. In the year 1639, he published a warm exhortation to the practice of the duties of family religion, which he considered as one remedy for such abuses. He afterwards drew up a paper of *caveats* as to the use of such meetings, which gave general satisfaction to his brethren on both sides of the question. This was proposed to the Assembly at Aberdeen, at which he was not present; but in consequence of the heat which prevailed there, it was set aside. The matter was revived again in this Assembly (1641); and the debate, which was conducted harmoniously, issued in the enactment of an Overture, drawn up by Mr Henderson, in conformity with his general sentiments formerly expressed, and which may be seen in the printed Acts of this Assembly, under the title of "Acts against impiety and schism."

To this Assembly Mr Henderson delivered a letter which he had brought with him, addressed to them from a number of ministers in London and its vicinity, expressing their desires of reformation, and requesting advice from the Assembly respecting the opinions of some of their brethren who inclined to Independency and popular government in the church. The Assembly gave him instructions to answer this letter. From the observations which he had made during his late residence in London, and the intercourse which he had there both with ministers and people, he clearly foresaw that there would soon be a change in the English Church, and that there was a prospect of their approaching to greater conformity with the Church of Scotland, an object which he had much at heart, and

which, as one of the late Commissioners, he had endeavoured to advance. He therefore moved, that the Assembly should take steps for drawing up a Confession of Faith, catechism, directory for worship, and platform of government, in which England might afterwards agree with them. The motion was unanimously approved of, and the burden of preparing them at first hand was laid upon the mover ; liberty being at the same time given him to abstain from preaching when he should find it necessary in attending to this interesting business, and of calling in the aid of such of his brethren as he pleased. He declined the task as too arduous, but it was left upon him ; and there can be little doubt, that this early appointment contributed to prepare him for giving assistance in that work, when it was afterwards undertaken by the Assembly at Westminster.

Before the conclusion of this Assembly, Mr Henderson petitioned for liberty to be translated from Edinburgh. He urged that his voice was too weak for any of the churches in town ; that his health was worse there than in any other place, so that to keep him there was to kill him ; and that, in the act for his translation from Leuchars, there was an express clause, which provided that he should have the liberty which he now craved. The Assembly were perplexed by his insisting upon this petition. The City of Edinburgh was extremely averse to his removal ; they offered to purchase him a house and garden in an airy situation, that he might cease from preaching when he thought it necessary, and use his freedom in going to the country at any time when the state of his health required it. They were the more averse to his removal, as a petition had been presented to the Assembly for

his translation to St Andrews, to be the Principal of the University there. Some imputed his earnestness for removal from Edinburgh to his displeasure at the speeches of some of the inhabitants, on account of his opposition to their humour for innovations; but he affirmed that health was the sole ground; that if this did not fail, he would still continue, even though liberty was given him; and that, if he did remove, he would not go to St Andrews, but to some quiet country charge. His petition was at last granted; but he either did not find it necessary, or was prevailed upon not to make use of the liberty which he obtained.

King Charles, having come to Scotland to be present in person at the Parliament held at this time, on the Sabbath after his arrival at Edinburgh, attended public worship, and heard Mr Henderson preach in the forenoon in the abbey-church, from Rom. xi. 36. In the afternoon he absented himself; but Mr Henderson having conversed with him respecting this, he afterwards gave constant attendance. As he had been appointed royal chaplain, he performed family worship in the palace every morning and evening, after the Scottish form. His Majesty attended duly upon this service, and exhibited no symptom of dissatisfaction or scruple at the want of a liturgy and ceremonies,—a circumstance which gave the Scots encouragement to expect, that he would easily give way to the reformation of the English service. On the last day of the meeting of Parliament, which it was the custom to hold with great solemnity, his Majesty being seated on his throne, and the estates in their places, Mr Henderson began with prayer; and the business being finished, he closed the meeting with a sermon. The revenues of the bishoprics were divided at this Parlia-

ment. Mr Henderson exerted himself on this occasion for the Scottish universities ; and by his influence, what belonged to the bishopric of Edinburgh and priory, was, not without difficulty, procured for the university of that city. As a recompense for his own laborious and expensive services in the cause of the public, the emoluments of the chapel-royal, amounting to about 4000 merks a-year, were conferred upon him.

Some of his friends were displeased with his conduct during this Parliament, particularly in using means to screen from punishment some persons who had entered into engagements hostile to the late proceedings of the nation ; and reports, injurious to his character and the purity of his motives, were circulated, and, as is common in such cases, met with too easy belief. But one, who differed from him in opinion as to the measures in question, bears witness, that “ his great honesty, and unparalleled abilities to serve this church and kingdom, did ever remain untainted.” In the next Assembly, he made a long and impassioned apology for his conduct. He said, that certain things for which he was blamed were done by the Commissioners of the Church, not by him ; that what he had received from the King for attendance upon a painful charge, was no pension ; that he had as yet touched none of it ; that he was vexed with injurious calumnies. Having given vent to his feelings, and received the sympathy of his brethren, and the assurances of their unshaken confidence in him, he was relieved, and recovered his cheerfulness. I cannot here forbear quoting Mr Henderson’s words at another time, which discover to us the reflections which supported his pious mind, and disposed him to persevere in his patriotic

and useful serviees, amidst “evil report” as well as “good report.” Having started the questions, How it eomes about, that those who have deserved best of the publie, have, in all ages, been requited with ingratitude? and how, notwithstanding of this, persons are continually raised up to perform the same serviees? after produeing the answers commonly given by philosophers to these questions, he adds, “Our profession can answer both in a word, that, by a speeial providence, such as have deserved well come short of their rewards from men, that they may learn, in serving of men, to serve God, and by faith and hope to expect their reward from himself;—and that, notwithstanding all the ingratitude of the world, the Lord giveth generous spirits to his servants, and stirreth them up by his Spirit (the motions whereof they neither can nor will resist), to do valiantly in his cause.”

During the year 1642, Mr Henderson was employed in managing the eorrespondence with England, respecting ecclesiastical reformation and union, which the General Assembly had kept in their eye for some time past. The ministers about London who were attached to Presbyterian principles, had conceived a high esteem for Mr Henderson, whom, in a letter to the General Assembly, they style, “a brother so justly approved by you, and honoured by us;” and they confided more in him than in any other. The Parliament of England having abolished Prelaey, requested that some divines should be sent from Scotland to assist in the Synod, which they had agreed to call. Upon this, the Commission of the Church met, and being authorised by the former General Assembly, appointed certain persons as Commissioners, to be ready to repair to England, as soon as it should be

necessary. Mr Henderson was one of these. He was averse to the appointment, protesting that on his former journey, he thought he should have died before he reached London ; but he at last acquiesced, not without complaining, that some persons were ready to impose heavy burdens upon him, and afterwards to invent or receive reports injurious to his character.

The dissensions between the king and the parliament of England, which had prevailed for some time, and had now burst out into a civil war, hindered for some time this journey. Mr Henderson was sincerely disposed to use every proper means for effecting a reconciliation between the parties ; and Bishop Burnet says, that he joined with a number of leading men in an invitation to the queen to come to Scotland, upon terms consistent with her safety and honour, with a view of promoting a mediation—a proposition which was rejected by the king. After this, Mr Henderson went in person to his majesty at Oxford, in company with the Commissioners from the State, who were sent to offer the mediation of Scotland. The appointment was procured by some persons who entertained sanguine hopes as to the influence which he would have upon the king ; but it produced no good effect, except that of convincing him and others of the vanity of all hopes from that quarter of an amicable accommodation, that would be consistent with the liberties of England, or even with security for the enjoyment of those which Scotland had lately obtained. At first, his majesty treated Mr Henderson with much attention, and strove to convince him of the justice of his arms ; but as soon as he found that he did not acquiesce in his representation, his behaviour to him altered completely. He expressed high offence at the

interest that the Scots took in the reformation of abuses in England, vindicated his employing of Papists in the army, and refused an allowance to the Commissioners to proceed to London to treat with the Parliament, although he had granted them a safe conduct for this purpose. They were insulted in the streets by the inhabitants of Oxford, and were even under apprehensions of their personal safety. While Mr Henderson remained at Oxford, some of the university divines wished to engage him in controversy, by proposing certain questions to him respecting Church government; but judging it unbecoming his character, as a representative of the Church of Scotland, to engage in a petty dispute with a few private individuals, and viewing this proposal as proceeding from a disposition to cavil rather than to receive information, he signified that his business was with the king. Lord Clarendon, who echoes the sentiments of the hierarchial divines, is greatly offended at the distance, or, as he calls it, the haughtiness which Mr Henderson observed on this occasion. Upon his return to Edinburgh, he made a full report of his proceedings with the king, to the Commissioners of the Church, who expressed their entire satisfaction with his conduct, and their judgment was approved by the next Assembly, who pronounced his carriage to have been "faithful and wise." At this time the Marquis of Montrose, who had become disaffected to the cause of the Covenant, which he had helped to establish, and who was secretly engaged to assist the King against the English Parliament, expressed a desire to have a conference with Mr Henderson, with the view of removing some scruples of conscience which he professed to entertain respecting the late proceed-

ings of the Scottish Estates ; though the real design of the request was to gain time, in consequence of the discovery of a plot in which he was engaged, to bring over the Scottish army in Ireland, to suppress the most powerful Covenanters, and to raise Scotland in behalf of Charles. Mr Henderson complied with the request as soon as he returned from Oxford ; and they met at the bridge of Stirling, where they had a long conversation. The Marquis treated him with wonted respect, and listened to him with apparent deference ; but Mr Henderson soon perceived that he was immovably fixed in his resolution, and he warned his friends, that they could put no confidence in Montrose.

The Scots were highly dissatisfied with the treatment which their Commissioners had received at Oxford ; and being now thoroughly convinced that the measures which the royal party were prosecuting were dangerous to both countries, they soon after entered into a very close alliance with the Parliament of England.

The General Assembly which met at Edinburgh, August 2, 1643, was rendered remarkable by the presence of Commissioners from the Parliament of England, and the formation of the celebrated Solemn League and Covenant. In the prospect of the important discussions which would engage their attention, the eyes of all were again turned to Mr Henderson, as Moderator, and he was the third time called to the chair. The business of the Assembly was conducted with great decorum in the presence of the English Commissioners, Mr Henderson exercising his function with a species of austerity which became his person, and which he could employ on proper

occasions. It having been agreed that the union between the two kingdoms should be cemented by entering into a sacred league and covenant, Mr Henderson presented a draught of one which he had composed, to a meeting of the three committees of the Parliament of England, the Scottish Convention of Estates, and General Assembly. This, after some alterations, was adopted by them, and transmitted to the General Assembly and Convention. Being introduced into the Assembly by a most appropriate speech from the Moderator, it was received with the utmost applause, and adopted with tears of joy. With the same cordiality it passed the Convention of Estates, and was ordered to be transmitted to the Parliament of England for their approbation. The General Assembly renewed the appointment of their Commission respecting the members to be sent from them to assist the Assembly of Divines sitting in London; and Mr Henderson was ordered to set out immediately, in order to procure the ratification of the covenant.

On the 30th of August, Mr Henderson set sail from Leith for London, in company with other Commissioners. The Solemn League having been approved by the two Houses of Parliament and the Assembly of Divines, the members of the latter, with the House of Commons, convened in St Margaret's, Westminster, upon the 25th of September; and having first sworn, afterwards subscribed the covenant. Immediately before they proceeded to this solemn work, Mr Henderson delivered an address to them, in which he warmly recommended the duty, as pleasing to God, exemplified by other churches and kingdoms, and accompanied with the most astonishing success. His account of the change which was effected upon Scot-

tish affairs, by the renewing of the National Covenant, may be quoted, as affording a fair specimen of his style, as well as of an animated and graphic picture of an interesting scene in which he had occupied a conspicuous place. "When the prelates were grown, by their rents and lordly dignities, by their exorbitant power over all sorts of his Majesty's subjects, ministers and others, by their places in parliament, council, college of justice, exchequer, and high commission, to a monstrous dominion and greatness, and, like giants, setting their one foot on the neck of the Church and the other on the neck of the State, were become intolerably insolent; and, when the people of God, through their oppression in religion, liberties, and laws, and what was dearest unto them, were brought so low, that they choosed rather to die than to live in such slavery, or to live in any other place, rather than in their own native country;—then did the Lord say, 'I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people, and have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them.' The beginnings were small and contemptible in the eyes of the presumptuous enemies (such as use to be the beginnings of the greatest works of God), but were so seconded and continually followed by the undeniable evidence of Divine Providence, leading them forward from one step to another, that their mountain became strong in the end. No tongue can tell what motions filled the hearts, what tears were poured from the eyes, and what cries came from the mouths of many thousands in that land, when they found an unwonted flame warming their breasts, and perceived the power of God raising them from the dead, and creating for them a new world wherein should dwell religion and right-

eousness. When they were destitute both of monies and munition, which, next unto the spirits and arms of men, are the sinews of war, the Lord brought them forth out of his hid treasures, which was wonderful in their eyes, and matter of astonishment to their hearts. When they were many times at a pause in their deliberations, and brought to such perplexity, that they knew not what to choose to do for prosecuting the work of God (only their eyes were towards Him), not only the fears and furies, but the plots also and policies of the adversaries, opened the way unto them ; their devices were turned upon their own heads, and served for the promoting of the work of God. The purity of their intentions, elevated above base and earthly respects, and the constant peace of their hearts in the midst of many dangers, did bear them out against the malicious accusations and aspersions put upon their actions. All which were sensible impressions of the good providence of God, and legible characters of his work, which, as the church and kingdom of England, exercised at this time with greater difficulties than theirs, have in part already found, so shall the parallel be perfected to their greater comfort in the faithful pursuing of the work unto the end."

During the three following years, Mr Henderson remained at London, and was unremittingly employed in assisting the Assembly of Divines there in preparing the public formularies for the religious union between the three kingdoms, which had been sworn in the Solemn League. Being a stranger, and sustaining, with the rest of the Commissioners from Scotland, a peculiar relation to the Assembly, he spoke but seldom in its debates, although possessed of ta-

lents which qualified him for taking a leading part, and accustomed to public speaking in the Assembly of the Church at home. But when it was necessary to vindicate the principles of the Church of Scotland, and of the other Reformed Churches, from slanderous imputations, he no longer kept silence. Mr Nye, a forward Independent, one day when he perceived the Assembly-House full of the prime nobles and chief members of Parliament, undertook to demonstrate, that the Presbyterian mode of drawing a whole kingdom under one National Assembly, was formidable and pernicious to civil states and kingdoms. Mr Henderson, indignant at such language from one who had solemnly engaged to preserve the government of the Church of Scotland, with honest warmth repelled the charge. He remonstrated against the inflammatory tendency of such speeches, shewed that Nye had calumniated not only the Church of Scotland, but all the Reformed Churches; and that he imitated Lucian and other pagans, who stirred up princes and states against the Christian religion.

His wisdom was displayed in preserving harmony among the members of Assembly, and in uniting their views as to those measures which were requisite in the prosecution of the great cause, which they had all solemnly sworn to promote. Different instances of this occur in the history of the proceedings of that Venerable Assembly. There were very keen debates in the Assembly respecting the office of Doctor in the Church; those who inclined to Independency insisting that, by Divine institution, there ought to be a doctor in each congregation, as well as a pastor; while others maintained the absolute identity of pastor and doctor. When there appeared no prospect

of accommodation, Mr Henderson so managed the cause between the two parties, that they were brought, in a committee, to agree on certain propositions, which, without stating the absolute necessity of a doctor in each congregation, or the Divine institution of the office in formal terms, provided that where there was a plurality of ministers in one congregation, they may be designed to several employments; the minister whose gift lay more in exposition than in application, being called "doctor or teacher." On another occasion, when the Assembly were employed on the subject of ordination, that passage in Acts xiv. 23 ("They ordained them elders in every church"), being proposed as one proof of the doctrine, Mr George Gillespie, one of the Scots Commissioners, an acute disputant, objected to the application, urging that the word rendered *ordained* by our translators, properly expressed the people's act of choosing by suffrages. This introduced a warm dispute, which was terminated by their agreeing to Mr Henderson's motion, that although *prayer* and *fasting*, mentioned in the latter part of the verse, might include the imposition of hands and ordination, yet the proof should be made to rest upon the whole verse, with a declaration of the Assembly's intention not to prejudge thereby any argument which might afterwards be urged from it on the question of popular election. But while he exerted himself in reconciling differences which arose respecting subordinate steps of procedure, he steadily resisted every attempt, however plausibly made, to introduce principles contradictory to those of the Church of Scotland, and other Reformed and Presbyterian Churches. Acting according to these views, he stated himself equally in opposition to the schemes

of the Independents, and of a strong party in the House of Commons, who, tainted with Erastian principles, denied the divine right of Church government, and wished to subject the proceedings of the ecclesiastical judicatories to the control and review of the Parliament. In the debates of the Assembly, there was often great heat. This was in some measure owing to their divesting their prolocutor, or moderator, of all power, as the House of Commons did their Speaker, and converting him (to use the language of one who witnessed their proceedings) into *a mere chair*. Mr Henderson lamented this evil, and on a fast-day, after the religious exercises were ended, he embraced the opportunity of bringing the members to a free and brotherly conference on the subject, in which, having seen their fault, they resolved to guard against similar excesses for the future.

In the beginning of the year 1645, Mr Henderson was appointed to assist the Commissioners of the two Parliaments in the treaty between them and the King, at Uxbridge. The Parliamentary Commissioners were instructed to demand the abolition of Episcopacy, and the ratification of the Presbyterian government. The King's Commissioners objected to the abolition of Episcopacy, upon which it was agreed to hear the divines on both sides. Mr Henderson, in a speech which Lord Clarendon allows to have been eloquent, opened the cause, and took up that ground which bade fairest for bringing the question to the speedy issue which the state of matters required. Waving the dispute as to the lawfulness of Episcopacy, he said, "The question now was, Whether or not that form of government was necessary and essential to the Church? He argued that it was not: in

which opinion he was supported by the most eminent advocates for the Church of England since the Reformation, who had not pleaded for the divine institution, or the necessity of Episcopacy. He stated, that the question could not be answered in the affirmative, without condemning the Reformed Churches, all of whom, except England, were without bishops. He shewed that the bishops had always retained many superstitious rites and customs in the worship and government of the Church: That of late they over and above introduced many innovations, and made a nearer approach to the Roman communion, to the great scandal of the Protestant Churches abroad and at home; That they had been the prime instruments in embroiling England and Scotland, and in kindling the flame which now raged through the three kingdoms: That for these reasons the Parliament had resolved to change this inconvenient and mischievous government, and to set another in its room, more naturally formed for the advancement of piety; which alteration was the best expedient to unite all Protestant Churches, and to extinguish the remains of Popery; nor could he conceive that his Majesty's conscience could be urged against this salutary change, seeing his Majesty had agreed to the suppression of Prelacy in Scotland."

But the advocates for Episcopacy were determined not to risk their cause upon such grounds as were palpable to all, but studied to involve the question, by introducing the dispute at large respecting Episcopal government. Dr Stewart, clerk of the King's closet, and Commissioner for his Majesty in matters of religion, enlarged upon the apostolical institution of Episcopacy, and endeavoured to prove, that with-

out bishops the sacerdotal character could not be conveyed, nor the sacraments administered to any significancy. The debate, Dr Stewart said, was too general, and they ought to dispute syllogistically, as became scholars. To this Mr Henderson modestly replied, that “in his younger days he had taught logic and rhetoric; and although of late he had declined that species of learning, yet he hoped he had not altogether forgotten it; and therefore agreed to Dr Stewart’s proposal.” The dispute continued a considerable time; and although, as is common on such occasions, each party claimed the victory, yet, in the judgment of auditors who must be allowed not to have been prejudiced in favour of the divine right of Presbytery, Mr Henderson, while he equalled the King’s Commissioners in learning, surpassed them in modesty.

The treaty being broken off without success, Mr Henderson returned to London, and continued to assist the Assembly of Divines in their labours. This year his health visibly declined, and he suffered repeated attacks of the gravel and other disorders consequent upon hard study and confinement.

Towards the close of the year 1645, it was judged necessary that Mr Henderson, with some others, should go down to Scotland, to attempt to bring about better correspondence among the nobility, who, in consequence of the distresses of the country, occasioned by the ravages of Montrose, had fallen into disunion and animosities, which were fomented by the secret artifices of the Court. But, just when they were ready to take their journey, Mr Henderson was stopped, in consequence of the earnest request of the ministers and city of London, who represented the

impropriety of his absence at that critical time, when certain questions, upon which the uniformity between the kingdoms turned, were in dependence. The last service which he undertook during his stay in the English metropolis, was an answer to two scurrilous pamphlets against the Church of Scotland, by Bishops Adamson and Maxwell, which the Sectarians, in their great antipathy to Presbyterian government, had caused to be reprinted at London. But being called away before he had time to perform this task, he devolved it upon his colleague and intimate friend, Mr Baillie, who executed it with great ability in his excellent "Historical Vindication of the Government of the Church of Scotland."

The King's affairs, which had long been on the decline, were, in the spring of 1646, entirely ruined; upon which he threw himself, without any previous notice, into the Scottish army, who retired with him to Newcastle. He no sooner arrived, than he sent for Mr Henderson, who was his chaplain, to come to him. This was a critical moment. The Sectaries, who had the chief influence in the English army which had subdued the King's forces, were ready, upon his rejection of their terms, to have set him aside, altered the government and the whole state of the quarrel which had been maintained by the united arms of the two Parliaments. The only measure which promised settlement to the nation, and the restoration of the King to the actual exercise of his authority, was his speedy consent to the establishment of the Presbyterian reformation, which would have secured him the affection and support of the soundest and best part of the nation. That Charles was now disposed to grant this, there was reason to conclude from his de-

clarations to the Scottish army, and his letters to the Parliaments. Mr Henderson was judged the fittest person to deal with his Majesty about the necessity of a speedy compliance with this measure, and to remove any difficulties with which his mind might still be embarrassed. In these circumstances, notwithstanding his unfitness for the journey, he complied with the King's request, enforced by the advice and entreaties of his fellow-commissioners ; and in doing so, he gave another striking proof of his public spirit for the advancement of religion, and the salvation of his country.

He arrived at Newcastle about the middle of May. From his Majesty he received a welcome reception, but he soon perceived, not without deep concern, that he had been deceived as to his hopes of the King's compliance with the requisitions of his Parliaments. He signified, that he could not in conscience consent to the abolition of Episcopacy ; and proposed, that Mr Henderson should carry on a dispute with some Episcopal divines, of whose names he gave him a list, in his presence. This Mr Henderson declined, as what he had no authority to undertake, and no reason to expect, when he complied with his Majesty's request in coming to Newcastle. He represented also, that such disputations had seldom any good effect in putting an end to controversies, and that, in the present instance, such a mode would be exceedingly prejudicial to his Majesty's affairs. All that " I intended " (said he), " was a free, yet modest expression of my motives and inducements, which drew my mind to the dislike of Episcopal government, wherein I was bred in my younger years in the university." It was therefore agreed, that the scruples which the King

entertained should be discussed in a series of papers which should pass privately between him and Mr Henderson. These continued from the 29th May to 16th July. The papers are eight in number, five by his Majesty, and three by Mr Henderson. After perusing them, it is difficult to read without a smile the panegyrics which the Episcopalian writers have bestowed upon the *incomparable wisdom* of his Majesty, and the triumph which he obtained over Mr Henderson in the controversy. It may be safely said, that the papers referred to exhibit no specimen of judgment, or of acquaintance with the controversy, which indeed he expressly declines to enter upon; while in seeking to evade the force of the argument produced on the other side, he shifts from Scripture to the consent of the Fathers, which he could not produce, and with which he did not pretend to be acquainted. While he was continually urging his request for a formal dispute between Mr Henderson and the Episcopal divines, pleading that the universal consent of the Fathers, and practice of the primitive Church, should be admitted as the judge of controversies, and the authentic interpreter of Scripture, and starting objections respecting the power of the people to limit their princes, or to effect a public reformation, Mr Henderson gave him a counsel, the neglect of which cost the infatuated monarch his crown and his life. "While Archimedes," said he, "was drawing his figures and circlings in the sand at Syracuse, Marcellus interrupted his demonstrations. —Sir, were I worthy to give advice to your Majesty, or to the kings and supreme powers on earth, my humble opinion would be, that they should draw the minds, tongues, and pens of the learned, to dispute

about other matters than the power or prerogative of kings and princes; and, in this kind, your Majesty hath suffered and lost more than will easily be restored to yourself or your posterity for a long time." Perceiving that he pertinaciously adhered to opinions which were disowned by all moderate Episcopalians, and maintained by such only as had acted as incendiaries between the King and his Parliaments, Mr Henderson declined entering farther into a fruitless dispute. While thus engaged, his correspondence with his friends in London apprised him that matters were fast approaching a crisis. In April 1646, his friend, Mr Baillie, writes him:—"The prevalent party desires nothing so much as the King's refusing of any one of the propositions. It is the sense of all I meet with, that if the King should but delay to grant the propositions, this people will declare against him, and reject him for ever from being King. Though he should swear it, no man will believe it, that he sticks upon Episcopacy for any conscience." "May 19.—There is much talk here of the King's obstinacy; the faction rejoices herein. If he would do his duty, in spite of all knaves, all would in a moment go right; but if God has hardened him, this people will strive to have him in their power, and make an example of him." In July he writes again:—"Your debates upon Episcopacy, I never took to be conscientious, but merely politic, and a pretence to gain time. I hear France has, or will loose that scruple of conscience very easily. Will such base hypocrisy be blessed? The passing of the proposition for Episcopacy will not do your turn now. You have that good property to do all out of time. Sir, if you have any power, let that man (the King) come off once very

frankly in all things, and he shall have all he ought to desire. Will he do it by halves and quarters, he is running to utter destruction; who can help it? Yet I must be one of the mourners for it. Sir, give over your disputations; they are but vain." This information Mr Henderson communicated to his Majesty (for whose ear it seems to have been intended), but it had no effect upon him. By this time, Commissioners from the respective Parliaments had come to Newcastle, with propositions of peace to his Majesty, and also Commissioners from the General Assembly to join Mr Henderson. All of them, on their bended knees, begged him to grant the propositions, but he steadily refused. Afterwards Mr Henderson, with Mr Robert Blair (who had greater favour with the King than the rest), dealt with him most earnestly, and with tears, to satisfy the desires of his kingdom, but without success.

During his conference with the King, Mr Henderson's health, which was bad when he came to Newcastle, had grown much worse. His colleagues at London, alarmed at the accounts of it which they received, wrote to him, entreating that he would take care of himself, and not allow vexation, on account of the obduracy of the king, to prey upon his spirits, and increase his disorder. "Let me entreat you for one thing," says Mr Baillie, in a letter to him, dated May 16, "when you have done your uttermost, if it be God's pleasure to deny the success, not to vex yourself more than is meet: *Si mundus vult vadere*, &c. When we hear of your health and courage, it will refresh us." In another letter, dated August 4, that correspondent writes to him:—"Your sickness has much grieved my heart. It is a part of my

prayers to God, to restore your health, and continue your service at this so necessary a time. We never had so much need of you as now. The King's madness has confounded us all. We know well the weight that lies on your heart. I fear this be the fountain of your disease ; yet I am sure, if you would take courage, and digest what cannot be got amended, and if, after the shaking off melancholious thoughts, the Lord might be pleased to strengthen you at this time, you would much more promote the honour of God, the welfare of Scotland and England, the comfort of many thousands, than you can do by weakening your body and mind with such thoughts as are unprofitable." And in the last letter he appears to have written to him, dated August 13, he says, "Your weakness is much regretted by many here. To me it is one of the sad presages of the evils coming. If it be the Lord's will, it is my hearty prayer oftentimes, you might be lent to us *yet* for some time."

But all advice and caution were now in vain. His constitution, which appears never to have been vigorous, was worn out with the fatigues both of body and mind to which he had been subjected, with little intermission, during nine years. His late journey had much injured it, and the behaviour of the King, together with the evils which his foreboding mind saw as likely to be the consequences of this, must have contributed to aggravate his trouble. Judging that his distemper was mortal, he resolved to return to Scotland. But before he left Newcastle, he obtained an audience from the King, and having again reminded him of the critical situation of his affairs, he bade a final farewell to him, having discharged the duties of his commission, as well as of that em-

ployment which placed him about his Majesty's person, in the fulfilling of which he had enjoyed little satisfaction. He went to Scotland by sea, and arrived at Edinburgh, August 11, very sick and much exhausted. During eight days after this, he continued so weak, that he was able to discourse little. But he enjoyed great peace of mind, and expressed himself (in what he was able to say) much to the comfort of his brethren and Christian acquaintance who visited him. In a confession of faith afterwards found among his papers, written with his own hand, and expressed as his dying thoughts, among other mercies, he declares himself "most of all obliged to the grace and goodness of God, for calling him to believe the promises of the Gospel, and for exalting him to be a preacher of them to others, and to be a willing, though weak instrument in this great and wonderful work of Reformation, which he beseecheth the Lord to bring to a happy conclusion." On the 19th of August he rested from his labours, sickness, and sorrow, being mercifully taken away from seeing the evils which were approaching, and the interruption which God, in his wise sovereignty, was pleased to give to that work, in the promotion of which he had been so zealous and useful.

His body was interred in Greyfriars churchyard. As he had no family of his own, his nephew, Mr George Henderson, performed the last kind office of humanity to his earthly part, and erected a monument over his grave, with suitable inscriptions.

These inscriptions testify the high esteem in which Mr Henderson was held at that time by all classes, as well as the affection of his relation. Not only was the lamentation for his death universal through Scotland,

it extended also to England. A London newspaper, dated August 31, 1646, says, "This day—the only news was by letters from the North, and first of all a sad lamentation for the death of Mr Henderson." After the Restoration, when every species of indignity was done to the preceding work of Reformation, and those who had been active in promoting it, the Earl of Middleton, the King's Commissioner, procured an order of Parliament in July 1662, for erasing the inscriptions, and otherwise disfiguring his monument. But at the Revolution, justice was again done to his memory. The monument was repaired, and the inscriptions replaced.

Had his enemies merely wreaked their resentment upon his perishable monument, it would have been a small matter ; but they industriously strove to blast his immortal reputation. Laying hold upon the circumstance of his having died soon after his conferences with the King at Newcastle, they circulated the report that he had become a convert to his Majesty's cause, and that remorse for the part he had acted against him had hastened his death. But this report, which had not the least shadow of foundation, was contradicted by the concurring testimony of all who had access to be acquainted with his sentiments during that time. "The false reports (says Mr Baillie, in a letter to his cousin in Holland) which went here of Mr Henderson, are, I see, also come to your hand. Believe me, for I have it under his own hand a little before his death, that he was utterly displeased with the King's ways, and ever the longer the more ; and whoever says otherwise, I know they speak false. That man died as he lived, in great modesty, piety, and faith." Mr Blair, who was a fellow-commissioner

with him at Newcastle, and who had an opportunity of being acquainted with all his transactions with his Majesty, and his most private sentiments respecting his conduct, testifies that he held fast his integrity to the end, mentioning this incidentally in the memoirs of his own life, as a great inducement with him to accept of Mr Henderson's place as chaplain to his Majesty. And Mr Livingston declares, that he was present, and saw him die with great peace and comfort.

Yet, about two years after his death, a pamphlet was published, as his declaration upon his deathbed, which, without an express recantation of Presbyterian principles, contained a high panegyric upon King Charles, particularly for devotion, magnanimity, charity, sobriety, chastity, patience, humility; and expresses a deep sense of the guilt of the Parliaments in their conduct towards him. This pamphlet was the forgery of a Scots Episcopal divine. No sooner did it appear, than the General Assembly appointed a committee to examine it, and afterwards emitted a declaration of its falsehood and forgery. In this, "out of the tender respect which they bear to his name (which ought to be precious to them and all posterity, for his faithful services in the great work of Reformation in these kingdoms, wherein the Lord was pleased to make him eminently instrumental), they declare, that after due search and trial, they do find that their worthy brother, Mr Alexander Henderson, did, from the time of his coming from London to Newcastle, till the last moment of his departure out of this life, manifest the constancy of his judgment touching the work of the Reformation in these kingdoms. All that he was able to speak in

that time (from his arrival in Edinburgh till his death), did clearly shew his judgment of, and affection to, the work of Reformation, and cause of God, to be every way the same then that it was in the beginning and progress thereof; as divers reverend brethren who visited him have declared to this Assembly, particularly two brethren, who constantly attended him from the time he came home, till his breath expired." After mentioning several other reasons, the declaration thus concludes: "Upon consideration of all which, the Assembly doth condemn the said pamphlet as forged, scandalous, and false. And farther, declare the author and contriver of the same to be void of charity and a good conscience, and a gross liar and calumniator, led by the spirit of the Accuser of the brethren."

The removal of Mr Henderson at such a critical juncture was a great loss to the Presbyterian cause, and as such was lamented by the wisest men in the three kingdoms. His influence with the nobility was missed in the dissensions between the Church and the Estates of Scotland, in the affair of the Duke of Hamilton's engagement. Speaking of the commission to Scotland of Charles II. after his father's death, one of Baillie's correspondents says, "Oh! we miss now that precious servant of Christ, Mr Alexander Henderson. He would have been a man fit for this purpose."

Alexander Henderson was enriched with an assemblage of endowments which have rarely met in one man. He possessed talents which fitted him for judging and giving advice about the political affairs of a nation, or even for taking an active share in the management of them, had he not devoted himself to

the immediate service of the Church, and the study of ecclesiastical business. He was not more distinguished by the abilities which he displayed in his public conduct, than by the virtues which adorned his private character. Grave, yet affable and polite ; firm and independent, yet modest and condescending, he commanded the respect, and conciliated the affection, of all who were acquainted with him ; and the more intimately his friends knew him, they loved him the more. The power of religion he deeply felt, and he had tasted the comforts of the Gospel. Its spirit, equally removed from the coldness of the mere rationalist, and the irregular fervours of the enthusiast, breathed in all his words and actions. The love of liberty was in him a pure and enlightened flame ; he loved his native country, but his patriotism was no narrow, illiberal passion ; it opened to the welfare of neighbouring nations, and of mankind in general.

Educated in Episcopal sentiments, and having the fairest prospects of advancement in a hierarchy fast rising in greatness, after he had set out with an ardent mind in the career of ambition, he sacrificed his hopes to the convictions of his conscience, and joined himself to a small body of men, who, though honourable in the sight of God, were despised and borne down by those who were in power. As his adoption of the original principles of the Church of Scotland was not hasty, nor the effect of personal disgust, but of deliberate examination, and the fullest conviction, he persevered in the maintenance of them without deviation, amidst great temptations. Though he had received a liberal education in the first university in the kingdom, and had attained to an eminent station in it, he cheerfully devoted his time and talents to the care of

a people in an obscure corner, where he lived contented and beloved upwards of twenty years, and from whom he at last submitted, with extreme reluctance, to be parted. Called forth by the irresistible cry of his dear country, when he found her reduced to the utmost distress, by the oppression of ambitious prelates, supported by an arbitrary court and corrupt statesmen, he came from that retirement which was congenial to him, and entered upon the bustle of public business, at a time of life when others think of retiring from it. Though he sighed after his original solitude, and suffered from the fatigues and anxiety to which he was subjected, yet he did not relinquish his station, nor shrink from the difficult tasks imposed upon him, until his feeble and shattered constitution sank under them, and he fell a martyr to the cause.

He appeared on the public stage with a mind improved by reading and experience, and an acquaintance with mankind, which genius, directed by cool attention, can acquire in situations very unfavourable. His learning, prudence, and sagacity, soon distinguished him among that band of patriots who associated for the vindication of their national rights; and he was consulted by the principal nobility and statesmen on the most important questions of public concern. Averse to severe or high measures, and disposed to unite all the friends of religion and liberty, he nevertheless did not hesitate to approve of and recommend bold and decisive steps, when necessary to remedy intolerable grievances, or to prosecute and secure a necessary reformation. His sagacity and political wisdom were free from the base alloy of duplicity and selfishness, by which they are so often degraded.

His integrity and virtue remained uncorrupted, amidst the blandishments of the Court, and the intrigues of the Cabinet. The confidence reposed in him, and the influence which he was enabled to exercise, which were as great as any ever enjoyed in a Presbyterian church, he did not in a single instance betray or abuse.

In forming an estimate of Mr Henderson's character, it would be improper to overlook his qualifications for assisting ecclesiastical judicatories, and particularly the Supreme Council of the Church to which he belonged, in which he repeatedly occupied the situation of moderator. In all large, deliberative, and free assemblies, the preservation of order, and expediting of business, depend greatly upon the talents and conduct of the person who acts as president. It is much to the credit of the subject of this memoir, that, in the Assemblies in which he presided, there was no uproar, disorder, or indecency, although the times were turbulent; and that, in the multiplicity of business which pressed upon them, confusion was avoided. His character, his appearance, his manners, procured him respect both from his brethren in the ministry, and those who acted as elders. With great dexterity he interposed, when there was any appearance of heat between the speakers, and ever, on such occasions, acted the part of a moderator. He knew how to bear with the scruples, and even the humours of good men, and at the same time to check unreasonable and wilful disobedience to necessary orders. Without infringing the liberty of the court, he could urge on a vote, or put a stop to tedious debate and desultory conversation. No honest mind could be hurt by the severity of his reproof, for all candid men could perceive the goodness which dictated it, or

make allowance for the necessity of his situation. Even occasional discoveries of heat of temper, which are often to be seen in studious men of amiable dispositions, when wearied out with unreasonable opposition, were not without their utility in the situation which he occupied. It was his custom as moderator, to introduce an important question with a short speech, in which he gave a perspicuous view of the cause ; and on its discussion, he also said a few words, recapitulating the grounds of the Assembly's judgment. The pertinent and religious reflections which he threw in on remarkable occurrences, had often a most happy effect, sometimes filling the Assembly with deep concern, at other times cheering and elevating their minds amidst discouragements and heaviness. But, among all his qualifications, what deserves particular attention, was that faculty of fervent, sweet, and appropriate prayer, which he exercised without flagging through all the Assemblies in which he moderated.

Mr Henderson was too actively engaged in public business to find much leisure for preparing works for the press. But though he published little to the world as his own, his compositions were passed into acts both of the Church and State—obtained the sanction of the supreme authorities in the three kingdoms, were subscribed by all ranks of persons, and will continue to be famous in the history of his native country, and to be remembered as long as any taste for true patriotism and genuine religion remains. It will be recollected by the friends of genuine liberty, and of the Presbyterian Reformation, that the principal public papers from 1637 to 1646, and particularly the bond in which the National Covenant was renewed in 1638, and the Solemn League and Co-

venant, were drawn by the pen of Alexander Henderson.

Besides these, and his papers in the controversy with the King, he was the author of a tract, which does not bear his name, entitled, "The Government and Order of the Church of Scotland." This small publication, which was written and published when he was in London in 1641, attending the treaty, must have been very useful at the time; and, with another pamphlet, published about the same time by Mr Gillespie, in defence of ruling elders and synods, had its share of influence in preparing the minds of the English, particularly about London, for the adoption of the Presbyterian government. It may be consulted still, not only as a relic of the valuable author, but also for information, as it contains a description, pretty circumstantial, of the government of the Church of Scotland, not only as it is to be found in her books of discipline, but as it was practised at that period.

There are three sermons of Mr Henderson's in print. The first is that preached before the General Assembly in 1638, already noticed. Though hastily composed, it exhibits a condensation of matter, and accuracy of arrangement, which discovered a mind well stored with knowledge, and capable of bringing it forth with promptitude on emergent occasions. The thoughts which were applicable to the circumstances are well introduced; they appear natively to rise from the subject, and they are illustrated and brought home with propriety and force. His second sermon is on Ezra, vii. 23: "Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven; for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king

and his sons ?” It was preached before the House of Commons at their solemn fast, on Wednesday, Dec. 27, 1643, and is described by Mr Baillie, as “a most gracious, wise, and learned sermon,”—a character which it justly deserves. His third printed sermon was preached before the two Houses of Parliament, on Thursday 18th July 1644, in Westminster, being a day of public thanksgiving for a victory obtained by the forces of both kingdoms, near York. The text is Matt. xiv. 31 ; “And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt ?” These sermons afford a specimen of his manner of preaching. It was strictly *textual*, so that none of his sermons could with propriety have been preached from any other passage of Scripture than that which is placed before them. His method is taken either from the natural division of the words, or from a proposition which shortly expresses their just import. Though composed hastily, amidst a multiplicity of avocations, they afford very favourable specimens of his talents, and justify the reputation which he gained in this species of composition. As a public speaker, he was eloquent, judicious, and popular. His eloquence was easy, but impressive ; grave, but fluent. It was like the motion of a deep river, which carries one insensibly with a full tide, rather than the rapidity of a swollen torrent. “Learned, eloquent, and polite,” says Grainger, “and perfectly versed in the knowledge of mankind, he knew how to rouse the people to war, or negotiate a peace. Whenever he preached, it was to crowded audiences ; and when he pleaded or argued, he was regarded with mute attention.”

I may conclude with the following character of him, drawn by his friend Mr Baillie, in a speech he delivered before the General Assembly in 1647 :—
“ That glorious soul of blessed memory, who now is crowned with the reward of all his labours for God and for us, I wish his remembrance may be fragrant among us, so long as free and pure Assemblies remain in this land, which we hope shall be to the coming of our Lord. You know he spent his strength, and wore out his days, he breathed out his life in the service of God and of his Church. This binds it on our back, as we would not prove ungrateful, to pay him his due. If the thoughts of others be conform to my inmost sense, in duty and reason, HE OUGHT TO BE ACCOUNTED BY US AND POSTERITY, THE FAIREST ORNAMENT, AFTER JOHN KNOX, OF INCOMPARABLE MEMORY, THAT EVER THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND DID ENJOY.”

A SERMON,

PREACHED BEFORE THE LORDS AND COMMONS, AT
MARGARET'S CHURCH IN WESTMINSTER, UPON
THURSDAY THE 18TH OF JULY, 1644.

BY ALEXANDER HENDERSON.

(DEDICATION.)

To the KIRK and KINGDOM of SCOTLAND, Grace to you,
and Peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus
Christ.

THREE reasons have prevailed with me to set your honourable and reverend name before this Sermon. One is, that having preached it before the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of England, I conceived it more convenient to send it to you in print, than to direct it to them the second time. And in so doing I cannot apprehend any danger of censure: because the ground of my calling to join in so solemn an action, was rather a national concernment, than any personal respect for me, or expectation of any thing that could proceed from my weakness worthy of such an auditory, as is one of the greatest and gravest on earth. In this therefore, if I mistake not, I do comply with their intentions, and still follow their respects. Another reason is, that after so long absence, not only from my personal charge, but from you, my mother Church and native country, I do willingly take hold of this opportunity, to testify that we your servants for Christ, who have the honour to be in

this employment, do bow our knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family of heaven and earth is named, that he would grant unto you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, (Eph. iii. 14-16). And that we cannot enough render thanks to God for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God ; night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and, according to our calling and measure, might perfect that which is lacking in your faith, (1 Thes. iii. 9, 10). The opinion of the merit of prayer is abomination, but the principal theme and matter of the solemnity of the day, we take for an answer of the prayers of the godly in the three kingdoms, and in all the Reformed Kirks ; and the desire we have to see you, is not only that natural instinct, which is to be found in all of our nation, whom the cause of God hath brought from their own homes and habitations ; but our longing to come unto you with rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us (Psal. cxxvi. 6), and to find you such as we would ; for now we live if ye stand fast in the Lord, (1 Thes. iii. 8). The third reason is, that I may, upon this occasion which God hath put in my hand, communicate unto you my humble thoughts for your good, unto which many thousands of your sons, worthier than I can have any reasons to think myself to be, have, according to the commandment of God and their manifold obligation, devoted and sacrificed themselves and all that they have. For my part, since I am not able to pay my duty to the full, I shall still acknowledge my obligation, confess my debt, and what I have (which is a small proportion to that which I owe) I shall willingly offer.

The Lord hath done great things for you, and by you. His Spirit speaking in your faithful pastors, and working in your own hearts, will teach you and give you grace in wisdom and humility, to compare your present estate under the light, purity, liberty, and blessings of the gospel, with

the darkness, corruptions, tyranny, and miseries, which our forefathers were covered with under Paganism of old, and under Antichrist afterwards, and which ourselves did endure under antichristian Prelacy of late. It is true, the present times are full of sufferings, calamities, losses, and fears; all the three kingdoms have drunken, although by unequal draughts, of a very bitter cup, such as the Lord propineth when he is angry with his people, and no man knoweth when the end shall be. Yet if we consider what our miseries might have been, if these our miseries had not been; that we ought to choose affliction, and not impiety or iniquity, and that all our troubles are but the travailings of childbirth, to bring forth a reformation; we will take the saying of Ecclesiastes to be spoken to every one of us: "Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than those? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this," (Eccles. vii. 10). I intend not to set forth the great power and merciful providence of God in the late seasonable deliverance, and notable victory never to be forgotten, that being recent in your minds, and the intent of the following Sermon. We ought to be thankful for the undeniable presence of God, to stir up ourselves to take hold of him, lest he hide his face and depart from us; and to go on hereafter with confidence in his name against the greatest difficulties.

But when I call to mind what hath come to pass in these days, since the beginning of our troubles, and begin to consider the proceedings and results of divine providence, contrary to the designs and devices of the enemies, which they cannot deny, and far beyond the first intentions and particular desires of such as the Lord hath used for instruments in his work, which they do reverently acknowledge, I may make use of the grave and serious warning of the apostle: "Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off," (Rom. xi. 22). And that we may the more value the

goodness of God to ourselves, we ought the more to behold the severity of God cutting off the pomp, the pride, the tyranny, and power of the enemies. I may also with him, although writing of a matter of another kind, cry out, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out ! For who hath known the mind of the Lord ? or who hath been his counsellor ?" (Rom. xi. 33, 34). Not only in the matter of salvation and damnation, but in the administrations of his providence, the Lord useth his sovereignty, and doth what seemeth good unto his wisdom : and although we know not the particular reason of every thing, yet this we know, whatsoever be the weakness of men upon the one hand, or the wickedness of men on the other, that all things are done by him that ruleth the world, in great wisdom and justice, to his own glory and the good of his church. Again, when from my sense of myself, and of my own thoughts and ways, (which many thousands may observe, and no doubt do observe of themselves) I begin to remember, how men who love to live obscurely and in the shadow, are brought forth to light, to the view and talking of the world ; how men that love quietness are made to stir, and to have a hand in public business ; how men that love soliloquies and contemplations are brought upon debates and controversies ; how men who love peace are made to war and to shed blood ; and generally, how men are brought to act the things which they never determined, nor so much as dreamed of before ; the words of the prophet Jeremiah come to my remembrance : " O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself : it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," (Jer. x. 23) ; which imply the positive part : that the way of man is in the hand of God, and that the Lord directeth his steps to his own appointed ends ; according to the saying of the wise Solomon, whether speaking of the decrees of God or of the word of God, " There are many devices in a man's heart ; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand," (Prov. xix. 21).

Experiments of things past, are documents of things to come. Let no man think himself absolute master of his own actions or ways: "When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not," (John xxi. 18). Let no man say, I shall die in my nest, in mine own house, with my children about me and under my wings, (Job. xxix. 18). We will learn I hope by time, if we be not unteachable, to distinguish betwixt our first and natural will, and our second, our spiritual and more deliberate will; and to say, Not my will, but thy will be done, (Matt. xxvi. 39). The seven years of ensuing providence, may carry us as far beyond the present intentions, whether of the enemies of religion, or our own, as the seven years past have done, beyond our former intentions and theirs. The pulling down of popery in the Christian world, and the pulling down of prelacy, and the supporters thereof in Britain, are equally feasible to the Almighty, who delighteth to turn our difficulties and impossibilities into the glorious demonstrations of his divine power; and who putteth motions into the hearts of men, which they turn into petitions and endeavours, and God, by his power, bringeth forth into reality and action. The conception, birth and perfection is all from himself.

When I speak of the future, and that which afterwards may come to pass, my meaning is not that God will always, and throughout the whole work, use the same individual instruments. Experience hath already proved the contrary. I speak of the collective and successive body, which like a flood runneth in a continual course, but the several parts passeth by very quickly. Joshua must succeed to Moses, and Elcazar to Aaron, before the people of God be brought into Canaan; and others must come after them before the temple be builded: each one whom the Lord calleth hath his own part. As the course of general providence in the world, and of special providence in the kirk, goeth on constantly

according to the eternal decrees of God, which men may oppose and clamour against, but can no more hinder than the rising sun, and his ascending to his strength; so doth the course of particular providence in the lives of men, which he cutteth off or continueth at his pleasure: nor should any man, who hath seen the beginning of this work, offend or be displeased that his days are ended before it ends, more than others, who shall be honoured to be the witnesses of the glorious conclusion thereof, have cause to be grieved that they have not seen, or had a hand in the beginnings of it; even as we have no more reason to be grieved that our life lasteth not longer, than that it did not begin sooner. No man could know, but his life might have been as short in peace as it hath been in war; nor was it in any man's power in the time of peace to choose the manner of his death. It should be sufficient for us that we follow the calling of God; that our life is not dear to us, when He who spared not his life for us calleth for it; that we are ready to lay it down in his cause; and that it shall add to our blessedness, if we die not only in the Lord, but for the Lord.

Let us therefore observe the Lord's providence, admire his wisdom and goodness, adore his sovereignty and greatness, and cheerfully offer and give up ourselves to be disposed upon at his will, seeking his glory, and not our own; and to approve ourselves to our own consciences, and not to the world. This will make us sincere and straight in our course, while others are seeking themselves quiet and secure in the midst of dangers; when others, like Magor-missabib, (Jer. xx. 3), have fear round about; and contented in confidence of a recompence of reward from God, against the ingratitude of men, when mercenaries have not the patience to bear it, because they served no other master, and had no other thing in their eye, but their wages;—a poor compensation of their pains, and no proportion to the adventuring of their lives. It is a frequent observation in history, upon a world of examples, that such as have deserved

best of the publie, have met not only with privative ingratitude, but have often been reeompensed evil for good, which hath given oeeasion to politieians to enter upon the debate of two questions. One is, what can be the eause of this so univarsally known and confessed ingratitude, not only from partieular persons, but from the publie? The other is, how it eometh to pass, that notwithstanding this known ingratitude, there be some found, in every age and state, that are more stirred up to deserve well of the publie, nor diseouraged or deterred by what hath befallen others before them? Concerning the first, amongst other answers taken from that corruption, malice, and envy, which poisoneth the nature of man, they allege that it proeedeth from covetousness, which maketh the publie to quarrel with them, that such may seem unworthy of reward, whose great merits they are either unwilling or unable to reward. The other they attribute to an heroic desire of immortal praise, and a divine disposition to do good to all. But our profession can answer both in a word, that by a speeial providence, such as have deserved well come short of their rewards from men, that they may learn in serving of men to serve God, and by faith and hope to expeet their reward from himself, and in end himself for their reward; and that notwithstanding all the ingratitude of the world, the Lord giveth generous spirits to his servants, and stirreth them up by his Spirit, the motions whereof, they neither can nor will resist, to do valiantly in his eause. God hath made you a fruitful mother of many sons, as England, France, and Ireland may this day bear witness. Never had your sons more eause to rejoiee in their mother, for God hath made you honourable; nor you the mother more eause to rejoiee in your sons, for God hath put it in their hearts to offer themselves willingly in and for the eause of Christ. If some have proved sons of Belial, void of grace and natural affection, and have provoked you to pronounce a maledietion upon them, the grace of God, which hath made the difference, is the more to be magnified; and they that stand, as they

are the more to be honoured, so are they warned to take heed lest they fall.

Two things there be chiefly, which will give you peace for the present, and through the blessing of God, will bring your troubles to a comfortable end. One is, that when ye hear of Separatists, Semi-separatists, Anabaptists, Antinomians, Libertines, Socinians, and of the many sects which Satan the father of heresies and schisms, in opposition to the intended uniformity in religion, hath raised in this kingdom, and which no wisdom under heaven is able to cure, but by settling the true government of the kirk by presbyteries and synods, ye may call to mind and apply to yourselves the wholesome counsel of the prophet Micah, "All people will walk, every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God, for ever and ever," (Micah iv. 5). He will not have us to promise to ourselves a universal consent in religion through the whole earth; nor to suffer ourselves to be driven away by the example or sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, "whereby they lie in wait to deceive," (Eph. iv. 14); but will have us to walk in the name of our God, which is nothing else but to understand, believe, and obey his word, by which he is known as by his name. And this he will have us to do, not for some time, but for ever and ever; and with the counsel of the prophet join the example of the Kirk of God, "All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant. Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way; though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death," (Psal. xlv. 17-19). This testimony of your uprightness and constancy, that no trouble could move you, so much as in heart, to turn away from the way of God, will be a well-spring of comfort to you in all your troubles, and this comfort (I speak it to the praise of the free grace of God) belongeth unto you. For would ye have dealt falsely in the covenant, and forsaken the truth, ye might not only have escaped all the troubles

which ye have sustained at home and abroad, but also have enjoyed all the peace and plenty that the world could promise. This I speak as a natural man ; and this indeed is the judgment of the natural man ; looking no higher than this world and the second causes. But as the messenger of God I may say, had ye dealt wickedly against his covenant, and blest yourselves in your own heart, saying, "I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart," the Lord would not have spared you, but the anger of the Lord and his jealousies would have smoked against you, (Deut. xxix. 20).

The other thing that I would to this purpose commend, is that ye would remember that besides heresy, which opposeth the truth professed by the kirk ; and besides schism, which destroyeth the unity of the kirk ; profaneness of heart and life, which is a third pest, hath ever spoiled the holiness of the kirk, and is a most high provocation against the most holy Lord God, which we are all to strive against, as well as against heresy and schism, by joining the power of godliness with the profession and form thereof, (2 Tim. iii. 5) ; and by holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience (1 Tim. iii. 9), which some sometime amongst you having put away, and that with violence done to their conscience, as the word importeth, concerning faith have made shipwreck, (1 Tim. i. 19) ; and have endeavoured to bring others upon the rocks, that they might perish with them. Spiritual judgments are to be observed no less than temporal, both because there is more wrath in them, and they are more hardly discerned. Pelagianism of old, and Arminianism of late, is the just punishment of a formal profession ; Socinianism, of the neglect of the Son of God ; Antinomianism, of turning the grace of God into wantonness ; Anabaptism, of baptizing of infants in private, and of the slighting of the baptism in public, as if it did not concern the whole congregation ; and Separation, of the despising of the true government of the kirk. So doth the Lord send strong delusions upon them that receive not the

love of the truth, and take pleasure in unrighteousness, (2 Thes. ii. 10-12). I will not excuse the length of this epistle, because I intended it. I am not bounded to a time in writing, as I behoved to be in preaching. I am bold with you, because I know you. To save you from spiritual judgments, to deliver you comfortably from your present troubles, and to make you walk worthy of the grace wherein the Lord hath abounded toward you, that you fall not, and that you may be presented faultless before Christ with joy, is, and shall be, the humble and earnest desire and prayer of

Your humble servant, and obedient son,
in and for the Gospel of Christ.

SERMON.

“And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?”—MATT. XIV. 31.

MUCH is this day required of your honours, much of you very honourable, and much of us all, beloved of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the times of the Old Testament, the sacrifices of one solemnity were much the same with the sacrifices of another; yet when more feasts did meet together in one day, as the Sabbath, the first day of the month, and the feast of trumpets, (Num. xxviii. and xxix.); all the sacrifices of the several days were offered in that one day, which made the greater celebrity. The Lord hath this day multiplied his benefits upon us, as the loaves and fishes were multiplied in the hands of the apostles, in the time of the distribution, (John vi.); for no sooner is the day indieted to give thanks for one favour, but we hear the news of another, that we may add more fire, and multiply our sacrifices.

Although these words of our Lord, at the first hearing, may seem not to be much important to the solemnity of the day, yet a twofold consideration hath led me to this choice. One is, because for some time past, where I had occasion to speak in public, I have been expounding and applying to our present troubles this part of the holy history, expressing the dangerous tempest which tossed the disciples of Christ at sea, as an emblem and representation of the condition of the Church of Christ on earth, especially in the time of great trouble; herein following the example, beside many other interpreters, of a worthy instrument of reformation,* who, in the idolatrous and bloody times of Queen Mary, did upon this text, in the evidence and power of the Spirit, write a large admonition to the professors of the truth in England. And now being by providence brought on to these words, expressing the deliverance of Peter out of his special tentation, and leading us towards the ceasing of the wind, and calming of the tempest, I judged them not unfit for the present condition, which God by his merciful providence hath brought our affairs into at this time. The Lord who stretched forth his hand, and caught Peter, when he was beginning to sink, and soon after made the wind to cease, which moved them that were in the ship to come and worship him, saying, "Thou art the Son of God;" the same Lord, even the Lord of armies, and the God of battles, hath stretched forth his hand for our deliverance; and when he will, he can rebuke the winds, and by his word make a comfortable calm, that all the three kingdoms may fall down and worship him, saying with one mind and one mouth, to the hearing of all the Christian world, "Of a truth thou art the Son of God;" which would prove a ground of reforming the house of God according to his own will: for if they had known the Son of God, the King of glory, they would not have crucified, but submitted unto him, and done his will. Another consideration also made me to fix

* John Knox. The letter was written in 1554 from Frankfort, after his flight from England.—ED.

upon this text. Although it doth not hold forth a formal thanksgiving, which is so ordinary in other places of scripture, that nothing more, and that which followeth here afterwards is liker unto it, yet it containeth the materials, and layeth the foundation of the duty : for it is a notable and seasonable deliverance out of a great distress, together with a most powerful argument to enforce the duty of thanksgiving, taken from the unworthiness of the party on whom it is bestowed : “Why didst thou doubt, O thou of little faith ?” The depth of our distress, the greatness of our deliverance, and the weakness of our faith, which hath made a great deal of doubting, are fuel to enflame our hearts, and to make the fire of the sacrifice to ascend.

In the words going before, Peter had not so much faith as that when the wind became boisterous he was able any more to walk on the water : for through the weakness of his faith he beginneth to sink ; yet he hath so much faith, that when he beginneth to sink, he crieth out, “Lord, save me.” And immediately the Lord answereth his prayer, and sendeth him a present deliverance in such manner as he might know it was from himself, for he stretched out his hand and caught him : but withal rebuketh him for the weakness of his faith, which made him so to waver, that at first he would assay to walk on the water, and now when he sees the wind boisterous he beginneth to sink.

The text parteth itself in two branches ; the one is a deliverance, the other a reprehension. The branch of deliverance beareth a sweet fruit of thankfulness, and the branch of reprehension, a more bitter, but very wholesome fruit of humiliation, which being tasted by us, maketh the deliverance to relish the better with ourselves, and the thankfulness the more acceptable to God : both together make up a composition like unto that of the holy oil and perfume, (Exod. xxx.) ; and leadeth us up to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense, (Cant. iv. 6).

In the deliverance of Peter, there be four things observable, and applicable unto our deliverance, 1. The greatness

of it. Peter was delivered out of a great danger : he was walking upon the water, and the wind was boisterous. 2. The seasonableness and opportunity of it : when he was beginning to sink. 3. The sensibleness of the hand of Christ in working it : he stretched forth his hand and caught him. 4. The relation of it to the prayer of Peter, unto which it was a real answer : Peter cried, "Lord, save me, and immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him." And fifthly, I take in the matter of the reprehension, which is the second part of the text, as it relateth to the deliverance : for his unbelief and doubting was the lead that made him sink, but free grace was the rock that carried him above, and so the deliverance was a free deliverance ; not from his merit, but contrary to his demerit. From these particulars, I present this observation.

DOCT.—That whoso are wise, and desire to see the loving-kindness of the Lord in their deliverance, that they may mutually love the Lord, and be thankful unto him, are to observe and consider not only the substance, and, if I may so call it, the bulk and 'body of their deliverance, but the circumstances also wherewith it is clothed, and with the train whereof it cometh accompanied unto us. For understanding whereof, we are to distinguish not only in human actions between one man and another, but in all our actions towards God, and in all the actions of God towards us ; betwixt the action itself, and the circumstances compassing and clothing it. For although jurisconsults, rhetoricians, and divines, do differ about the enumeration and particular description of circumstances, yet all of them with one consent acknowledge that they are much to be heeded and observed. In our good actions, where the substance is but small, the circumstance maketh a supply. The poverty of the widow added much weight to her two mites, which she threw into the treasury : " Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury : for all they did cast in of their abundance ; but she of her want did cast in all that she had,

even all her living," (Mark xii. 43, 44). In all our evil actions, it aggravateth our transgression, that we who are but dust and ashes, do sin against the greatest and goodest God, and that for trifles, for things of no worth and perishing; that we sin against knowledge, and against mercy. The distinction of sins of ignorance, of weakness, and presumption; the excusableness and inexcusableness of sin, ariseth from this ground. In the actions of God towards us, both the blessings and deliverances which we receive, are much illustrated and magnified by the circumstances of so great a God, that it is not lawful for us to endeavour to express how great he is; he being great without measure, that he should have loved us first, us so small, even before we were, and such, even his enemies; and so much, and so greatly, that he spared not his own Son to die for us, spared not his own Spirit to dwell with us. Thus we see how this love is magnified and multiplied by the circumstances which make it a great love, a manifold love, a wonderful love. So is it also in divine deliverances, both of his people in the times of the Old Testament, of his Church in the times of the New Testament, and of particular persons in both times. The circumstances add much light and lustre unto them, to endear them the more unto us. No man can think upon the deliverance of the people of God from Egypt, and from Babylon, and of the Christian Church from persecution, but he must spend a great part of his thoughts upon the circumstances of the deliverances. The deliverances from the Armada, from the powder treason, from the enemies since the beginning of this war, are great in substance, but each one of them is also admirable in the circumstances. And who can meditate upon the preservation and deliverance of Noah, of Joseph, of Moses, of David, of Daniel, of Jonah, of Peter, of Paul, and many others of old, and of late, but he must be affected with many particular occurrences of their deliverances? Natural men look to the substance only, and satisfy themselves in this, that they are delivered; but those that are spiritual cannot satisfy themselves in the

meditation of the circumstances, with which they are deeply affected.

There may be three reasons given why circumstances of this kind are to be observed. 1. Because the Lord God hath a providence in the smallest things, in things most casual and contingent, and in such things as are arbitrary unto men, and seem most to depend upon their will and election. And what he dignifieth with his providence we ought not to disdain in our observation. The poorest of the works of divine dispensation is abundantly rich in our meditation. 2. There is much manifestation of love to the people of God in circumstances, and much revelation of the wrath of God against the enemy. When the godly look upon them, their hearts are wonderfully affected, overcome, and melted within them; and when the wicked are constrained to hear of them, they are confounded within themselves, and never more than upon this ground, do apprehend that God hath been fighting against them, and they fighting against God. 3. A third reason may be, because the Lord prepareth matter for a sacrifice of glory and thanksgiving to himself, not only from the great bundles and sheaves of his work, but from the small scattered eares of his providence; for of him, and through him, and for him, are all things.

Upon these and the like grounds, we are to observe the circumstances of the work of God at this time. The deliverance and victory itself, is like the moon shining in the night with her borrowed light from the sun, yet the circumstances thereof are like the bright stars, and some of them of the first magnitude, twinkling, and sending out their light round about for our contemplation and comfort. The one is the fair and beautiful ground of the work, the other the embroidery and variety of colours wrought upon it by the hand of God, and laid before our eyes, that we may behold the manifold goodness, power, and wisdom of God.

I shall now therefore enter upon the particulars formerly proposed from the text; of which the first was the great-

ness of Peter's deliverance at this time, which may appear, if we consider these three things: 1. The glory of Jesus Christ: if Peter had perished at this time, it had not been, speaking after the manner of men, without dishonour to the Son of God; for being called by him to come upon the water, it would have been attributed to want of power in Christ if he had perished, and it was his glory to save him; and so in this respect the deliverance was great. 2. The danger he was in: the raging sea ready to devour him, he being unable to save himself, and there being no other to help him, and therefore in this respect the deliverance great. 3. The danger the other disciples were in; for if they had seen him sink down and swallowed up, what could they who were still tossed in the ship have expected, but to have perished also? and therefore in respect of the disciples it was a great deliverance. The Lord looketh to his own glory, to the distress of his servants that are like to perish, and to the scandal of others, and draweth them forth of many waters, (Psal. xviii. 16).

2. The seasonableness and opportunity of this deliverance is manifest by two things: one was, when the sea, through the boisterous wind, was in the greatest rage; the other was, when he was brought very low in his own sense. It is familiar in scripture to compare the enemies of the church to the raging waves of the sea. When the enemy is most arrogant and proud, and when the church and people of God are beginning to sink, then is the opportunity of the destruction of the one and deliverance of the other; for in that nick of time is the hand and power of God most discernible to his own glory, then is the confusion of the enemy most terrible, then is the deliverance of the godly most wonderful and comfortable. Hence is it that the Lord, who hath appointed time for every thing, and hath made every thing beautiful in his time, keepeth this rule in all his great deliverances: he suffereth the wicked to exalt themselves and to gather strength; he giveth them sometimes victories in a vicissitude with the people, and

thereby hardeneth their own hearts, and the hearts of others that trust in them, (as when the magicians brought things to pass, like unto the miracles of Moses); for how else should they grow up, and be made ripe for destruction? How should their cup be filled? He suffereth also his own people and his own cause sometimes to be borne down, for how else should they be in due time exalted? But all this is nothing else but a preparation for a glorious work of justice and mercy in the end. If men would lay this one parcel of providence to heart, they would be forced against all their atheism, to cry out, "Verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily he is a God that judgeth the earth," (Psal. lviii. 11).

3. The third thing is, the sensibleness of the hand of Christ in delivering Peter: "He stretched forth his hand and caught him." He could have saved him by his word only, as Matt. viii. 8: the centurion said, "Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed." Yea, without speaking of the word, by his divine power; for even when he did speak the word, it was not his word, but his power that wrought the miracle; as when before he said to Peter, "Come," it was not his word but his power that made Peter to walk upon the water. Yet he stretched forth his hand for divers causes, but principally, that it might be known that he it was that by his power did deliver him. Thus did he in working other miracles, as in curing the lepers and the sick, that it might be known that he himself, and no other did work them, and all to this effect, that when it is seen that his hand worketh deliverance he may have the glory of it. Wherefore are the works of God ascribed to the arm of God, the hand of God, the right hand of God, the finger of God, but that his power and efficiency may be acknowledged of us, and that he may have the praise of his own work? The Lord is a jealous God, and will not give his glory to another. He giveth many good things to the children of men, and worketh many notable deliverances for them, but the glory of them all he reserves for himself.

Potiphar committed all that he had to the hand of Joseph, and kept nothing back from him but his wife, which made Joseph to say, and we in this case may say it upon greater reason, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" (Gen. xxxix. 9). He is a usurper, an adulterer, an idolater and atheist, that robbeth God of his glory. "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me that I am the Lord, which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord."

4. A fourth thing to be taken notice of in this deliverance, is the relation it had to the prayer of Peter. He prayed in his danger and distress, and the Lord immediately stretched forth his hand and delivered him. The blessings and deliverances which God granteth unto his people are much endeared unto us by this, that they are the answer of our prayers. For beside the benefit and deliverance itself, our faith in the general is confirmed, that we worship not an idol but the true and living God who heareth prayer. Our special faith is much strengthened; for hereby we know that God heareth our prayer, that through Jesus Christ our prayers and persons are accepted, and that he is our God.

Hence it is observable that the godly, such as Hannah, David, and others, speak to God in more familiar terms after they had received the answers of their prayers, than before. Our confidence also is increased. For upon the gracious answer of our prayers we can with greater boldness present our petitions before the throne of grace. No man maketh conscience of prayer, or endeavoureth to pray aright, but he maketh also conscience and endeavoureth to observe the answer of his prayers. Sometimes the present answer of prayer is no other but the continuance of the spirit of prayer, which still helpeth our infirmities and

maketh intercession for us, (Rom. viii. 26). Sometimes our prayer returneth into our bosom, (Psal. xxxv. 13); where we find the peace of God which passeth all understanding, to keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus, (Phil. iv. 7). Sometimes we have no other answer but, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness," (2 Cor. xii. 9). And sometimes, either a better or the same thing which we desired, and it may be with great advantage, is granted unto us; of which there be many examples like unto this of the answer of Peter's prayer.

The fifth and last thing which setteth forth this deliverance is this, that it was of free goodness, and not from any perfection in him; for he is rebuked for his doubting as one of little faith. Where we may observe, that beside the wide difference betwixt believers and unbelievers, which is a difference in kind (faith elevating a believer far above natural men and unbelievers, as man is above the inferior creatures, and angels above men), there is a difference in degrees betwixt one believer and another, and betwixt a believer and himself; insomuch that one is said to be of little faith, and another to have great faith, and one and the same believer sometimes to have little, at other times great faith. Peter had faith to walk upon the water, which was the greater trial; but now when the wind is boisterous, which was the lesser temptation, his faith proveth weak, which was a prognostic of that which came to pass in his denial afterward. I have not a mind, nor is it proper for this time, to weary your attention with the many distinctions of faith: that there is a faith which is a habit and virtue theological, and a faith which is a special gift; that there is a faith felt, and a faith unfelt; much less with the distinctions of faith formed and unformed, explicit and implicit. I would only tell you that faith is said to be weak extensively, and in respect of the knowledge of the things to be believed: thus the faith of the apostles, while they knew not the resurrection of Christ, the faith of Rahab, the wo-

man of Samaria, and many others who knew but few of the mysteries of faith, was but a weak faith. Or intensively, and in respect of persuasion and application : it was long ere Thomas was brought to say, "My Lord and my God." He that hath this weak faith may be considered of us as he hath faith, for weak faith is true faith ; and as his faith is weak, as he hath faith he believeth and adhereth to the truth of the word, and in distress prayeth and crieth with Peter, "Lord, save me." But as his faith is weakened by temptations and difficulties, apprehended by natural sense and carnal reason, which is the wisdom of the world, and an enemy to the receiving of the wisdom of God, he doubteth, he wavereth, he staggereth through a mixture of unbelief, which certainly is the work of the flesh, whatsoever papists say to the contrary in commendation of doubting ; and yet such is the goodness and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that in this night of darkness, in this winter season, he looketh at the root under the ground, and to the leaf of prayer which it sends forth, when neither fruit nor flower doth appear, and thereupon he that breaketh not the bruised reed, and quencheth not the smoking flax, doth deliver his own children, which maketh them afterwards, when they recover their strength, to think shame of themselves, and to admire his wonderful goodness. Faith sometimes is like fire in the flint, which to the sense is as cold as another stone, yet hath fire in it naturally, as the soul, which is partaker of the divine nature, hath faith in it supernaturally ; sometimes it is like fire in the tinder, sometimes like fire in the match, sometimes like fire in the candle, and sometimes like fire on the hearth, which enlighteneth and warmeth the whole room. But the Lord in answering the prayers of his people, looketh more to the truth than to the degree of faith. The word of doubting, as some have searched into the nature of it, is borrowed from a balance or pair of weights, the scales whereof move and waver up and down inconstantly. We have another word (Mark xi. 23), which signifieth to dispute or debate

because they who doubt have a dispute and debate of adverse parties within themselves, like that of the twins which struggled together in the womb of Rebecca, and makes them to go and inquire of the Lord. The nature of faith (Heb. xi. 1), is a subsistence by which the mind, looking constantly at Jesus Christ, is preserved from fluctuating and doubting, as when the tongue of the balance standeth straight and stable. But Satan, the old Adam, and the world, come in, and sometimes lift up the one scale in presumption, and sometimes bear down the other in diffidence and pusillanimity. Christ opposeth to the one the danger of sinking, and to the other his word and hand, that so the soul may be reduced to the stability and subsistence of faith. Thus was the wonderful wisdom, mercy, truth, and power of the Son of God, manifested at that time, and many times since.

And thus have I made a survey of the five circumstances accompanying this miracle of Peter's deliverance ; all which are very applicable to that notable deliverance which the Lord hath wrought for us, for the public acknowledgment whereof we hold this solemn Assembly. First, if it had pleased the Lord to turn his hand against us, which was stretched out for us against our enemies, the name of God had been dishonoured, our armies had been destroyed, and ourselves, that were but in a ship near unto them, had been in danger to have perished ; and thus the deliverance is great.

2. As it was great and eminent, so was it opportune and seasonable ; I speak to them who are acquainted with the posture of affairs. The enemy had exalted himself to the top of his pride, and had designed, like Belshazzar and his nobles, to make themselves merry with the spoils of the people of God, who, although their hearts were stedfast to the cause and work of God, yet by divine dispensation delaying their desires, and bringing them about in his own wise and secret way, were brought low, and therefore in the one respect and the other, a very seasonable deliverance.

3. The hand of God was sensibly seen in it ; specially

that when they were almost lost in the opinion of many of themselves, the Lord brought the wheel about upon the enemy so marvellously, that it is a wonder that so many, although they had been naked men, could have fallen by the sword in so few hours.

4. That in this the Lord answered the prayer of his people. He hath heard us since the beginning of our supplications, he hath given grace to continue in humiliation and prayer, he hath many times returned our prayer into our bosom, he hath made his grace sufficient for us to uphold us, and hath given such victories, as have been large matter of thanksgiving. But in this he hath answered us above our expectation and particular desires at this time; for we should have been satisfied for the time with the rendering of that beleaguered city, but the Lord hath done much, yea, very much more.

5. And we may justly add the last, that the deliverance was of free goodness; for our faith was not perfect. Were not many of us full of doubting and fears, yea full of unbelief, that it might have been said of some of us, "Why have ye not believed, O ye of no faith?" And of the best of us, "O ye of little faith, why did you doubt?" Our hearts have been wavering, and moving up and down like a balance, sometimes presuming, sometimes distrusting, as wanting that subsistence of faith which fixeth the heart, and maketh a stableness and staidness of the soul.

It remains, that we make the right use of this notable work of divine providence. To this purpose, from the text, and from what followeth after, and goeth before about the same subject, I shall propose three very necessary duties; and what may serve either for reproof, or comfort, shall be intermixed, and for brevity be taken in with the duties.

USE 1. The first we may learn from that which followeth, verse 33, "Then they which were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God." They neither envy Peter, nor conceive any indignation against him for his prerogative in walking upon the

water, which was not granted unto them ; nor do they adore or admire him, knowing that without Christ he could not have been able to save himself ; for they had seen him beginning to sink, and had heard him cry out, “ Lord save me.” Only they fell down before Christ, adoring him, and give him this great testimony, “ Of a truth thou art the Son of God.” They who before, through the hardness of their hearts, had not considered the miracle of the loaves (Mark vi. 52), did by this miraculous work know him, and knowing him, they worshipped him. Nor did Christ reject their testimony, but by his silence consented unto, and sealed the truth of it. The same duty is required of us all. No man is to envy those worthies whom the Lord hath honoured to be instrumental in this great work. The Lord doth what, and by whom he will, and whom the Lord honoureth it becometh us to honour, which if we grudge to do the Lord will honour them the more. Again, no man ought to offer the fat of the sacrifice, or the principal praise of the day, unto the instruments. Did not many of them at first begin to sink ? and as many times before, so all of them at that time, were constrained to cry out, “ Lord, save us.” But we must all, and they also with us, fall down before Christ our Saviour and great deliverer, and with one heart and voice, say and sing, “ Of a truth thou art the Son of God ;” which he will admit as a praise due unto his name, and acceptable unto him, that he may have a name above every name. The humility of Gideon in answering the pride of Ephraim, was no less commendable than his courage against Midian, when he said unto them, “ What have I done now in comparison of you ? is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim, better than the vintage of Abiezer ?” It was the wisdom of Scipio the Roman general, when two of his soldiers contended about the crown, (due to him who first scaled the walls,) so hotly, that the whole army was in danger to be divided, so to determine the question that the crown was given to them both, both having, as he affirmed, climbed the wall together. It is observed by the

learned for a rule, that in a contest for priority and praise, when each party, from self-love, taketh the first place unto himself, or from partiality, giveth it to him whom he affecteth, that he who unanimously hath the second voice, is to be preferred before all. Upon this ground, the sect of the Academics amongst the philosophers hath been esteemed the best, because both the Stoics and Epicureans do give their voice to the Academics, next unto themselves. If a general of an army should examine his chief commanders, who next themselves did best in battle, it were like that he who had the second voice, were of the greatest merit; and yet they observe a fallacy and reprehension here; for men cunningly do incline to give testimony next themselves, unto those that are not like to come in their way, or to stand in their light. There needeth no such contest amongst us. Let all men, falling down, give the praise unto God, and be content that the work is done, and they have been faithful in their performances. What hast thou, which thou hast not received? What hast thou received which might not have been given to another, and which may not for thy pride and emulation yet be taken from thee, and given to another?

I know the distinction and difference which moralists make betwixt emulation and envy: that emulation hath place in the greatest and most magnanimous spirits; that he maketh them to covet and seek after the best gifts; that it affecteth the mind with grief, not because another is unworthy of that which he hath, for that is indignation, nor because another hath that which himself wanteth, for that is envy, but because thou wantest that which another hath, which beseemeth thee to have no less than him, and which by thy industry and the blessing of God, thou mightest have attained, or may yet attain unto. As when a godly man is grieved, that with other martyrs of Christ, for whose constancy in the truth he rejoiceth, he hath not also been partaker of the glory of martyrdom; or when a soldier is grieved, that with his fellow-soldiers, whose courage and

success he congratulates, he had not a hand in the glorious victory against the enemy. I deny not but such a pure emulation may be found in regenerate hearts, and that there may be somewhat like unto it in a Themistocles, that could not sleep when he began to think of the trophies of Miltiades. Yet would I have it acknowledged, that as emulation and envy are often expressed by one word in both the originals, so doth it come to pass that emulation, such is the base corruption of our nature, doth often degenerate into envy ; and seldom is it seen that he who is much emulous, is not somewhat envious. Some kinds of sins do reign and rage most in the time of peace and prosperity, another sort in time of war and trouble ; but envy findeth matter to work upon at all times. It is a monster of many heads : there is one kind of it like unto that in Joshua, (Numb. xi. 27, 28) ; and in the disciples of Christ, (Mark ix. 38) ; and in the disciples of John, (John iii. 26). We are not free of this kind of envy. There is another kind of it like that of the Philistines (Gen. xxvi. 14, 15), which is most diabolical. But besides these, there be other two sorts of it set on work by Satan at this time, and which all good men should beware of. One is, of those that cannot admit an equal, that would engross all alone, (Matt. xx. 11 ; Acts xiii. 45). Another of those that cannot permit any to be preferred unto them, as in Cain, (Gen. iv. 3, 4). In the brethren of Joseph, (Acts. vii. 9). In Miriam, (Num. xii. 2). In Saul, (1 Sam. xviii). It was foolishness in the woman and people, yet it was truth in the nobles of the Medes and Persians, (Dan. vi. 4, 5). The Seribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, and people of the Jews, (Matt. xxiii. 13 ; Acts v. 17 ; xiii. 44, 45).

We have an example of both sorts in the courtiers of Saul against David, and in Pompey the Great, and Julius Cæsar. As it is one of the most common, so is it one of the greatest evils in the world ; it being not only most opposite unto charity ; but the cause of contention, mutinies, lies, slanders, sedition, and bringeth a world of miseries

from the justice of God. No sort of persons have more need to be upon their guard against this enemy than brethren, amongst whom, if once emulation, hatred, and envy, find place to work division, they become irreconcilable; like unto fragments of crystal glass, which after breaking cannot be cemented again; because the smallest injury, where kindness is deserved and expected, and much more envy is judged to be ingratitude, which is acknowledged by all who know the nature of it, to be a manifest injury, and as intolerable as any other. And of all sorts of brethren, none have reason to take greater heed unto this evil, than such as naturally are strangers one to another, and of divers nations, but are sworn brethren: if the fire of envy and hatred once begin to burn in their breasts, they want the affection of natural brethren to extinguish it. The best remedy for such, is the right embracing of one true religion, and religiously to remember their covenant, by which they are joined to Jesus Christ, and amongst themselves; which will make them forget they be of divers countries and kingdoms, and timely to resist all divisive motions, the mother whereof is emulation and envy, which I heartily wish may be as far from us all as it was from the disciples of Christ at this time.

Setting aside therefore with the disciples all emulation and envy, all admiration and adoration of men, let us follow the example of the apostles in that twofold duty performed by them; the one is, the adoration of Christ, the other, the confession of Christ. They have not spoken amiss who conceive that there be four parts of the moral worship of God, according to the parts of the first and great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength," (Mark xii. ; Luke x.). The first of them is, the attentive consideration of the works of God by the outward and inward senses. The second is, the right judging of the works of God by the mind and understanding. The third is, the congruous and suitable affec-

tion of the soul by the heart, which is the seat of the affections. The fourth is, the testification of this affection in our whole life, by the actions of the will. Amongst which, for they be many, these two in the text are to be numbered; adoration and confession, which were the thanksgiving of the disciples at this time, and now upon our deliverance are required of us. And who is it that beholding the power of Christ in the greatness of the deliverance; the wisdom of Christ in the seasonableness of the deliverance; the jealousy of Christ, who will not give his glory to another, in the sensibleness of his hand in working it; the truth of Christ in hearing prayer according to his promise, and the merey of Christ in passing by so many sins, and so much doubting, wouldnot adore this mighty, wise, jealous, true, and merciful Lord? When the children of Israel had heard that the Lord had visited them, and that he had looked upon their affliction, "Then they bowed their heads and worshipped," (Exod. iv. 31). After that the Lord had spoken to Moses of the religion of the passover, and the smiting of the first-born of Egypt, "The people bowed the head and worshipped," (Exod. xii. 27). When Jehoshaphat upon his fast and prayer heard from the Spirit of the Lord, which came upon Jehaziel, that the Lord was to fight for Judah, and that they were only to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, he bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord worshipping the Lord, (2 Chron. xx. 18). At the restoring of religion and cleansing of the house of God, the king and all that were present with him, bowed themselves and worshipped, (2 Chron. xxix. 29). And shall not we when the Lord hath visited us, when he hath fought for us, and slain the strength and first-born of our enemies; when he is about the restoring of religion, and the cleansing and building of his temple, shall not we, in all fear and reverence, fall down and adore before him, acknowledging his sovereignty and our own baseness and unworthiness? Let the whole church, militant and triumphant, the twenty-four

elders, and the four living creatures, men and angels, fall down and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, saying "Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

The other part of their thanksgiving is their confession of Christ. They give him this testimony, "of a truth thou art the son of God." This they all confess, and were ready to confess before all the world, which they also did afterward. Of this testimony John saith, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God," (1 John iv. 15); which is not so to be understood, as if no other truth were to be confessed of him, but because that main and fundamental truth was then contraverted and denied by seducers and antichrists. The Lord requireth of each one of us according to our place and calling, that we confess and give our testimony unto such truths as are most called in question. At this time it is required of the honourable Houses of Parliament, that they give unto Jesus this testimony, which is a necessary consequent of the testimony of the apostles, That Jesus Christ is the King of his Church, and that it must be ruled by his sceptre: that the government is upon his shoulder, without which all our adoration and hallelujah, is but like the mocking of him by his enemies, when they clothed him, sometimes in purple, and sometimes in white, and did put a crown of thorns on his head, and in his hand a reed for a sceptre.

No duty better bescemeth the honourable Houses of Parliament than thankfulness; for in thankfulness there be three very eminent virtues suitable to their place and eminence. 1. Truth, when we acknowledge and profess who it is from whom we have received the benefit. 2. Justice, in rendering mutual duties: as receiving is joined with giving, so is rendering with receiving, which natural men have considered when they spoke of the three graces. 3. Wisdom, because gratitude procureth the continuance of favour, as ingratitude, not seeing and discerning favours

near unto us, moveth the Lord to remove them, that we may behold them afar off. So that gratitude hath truth, justice, and prudence in it; but ingratitude is an untruth, injustice, and foolishness. Of all men in the world, ungrateful men unto God are the most false, most unjust, and most foolish men. Far must this be, far I hope this shall be, from the honourable Houses and from both kingdoms.

USE 2. The second duty which I recommend is, obedience to the commands of Christ against all difficulties and temptations in the way. When the Lord commanded the disciples to enter into the ship they obeyed, although he went not with them, and the darkness of the night was approaching; and when they met with a stormy and contrary wind, it never so much as entered into their hearts to turn back again. When our Lord commanded Peter to come unto him upon the water, he gave absolute obedience. Obedience is a principal part of self-denial: by other virtues and graces we deny things of the world, and the natural delights of the flesh which concern the body; but this maketh us to deny our own will, and our natural reason, and to do the will of God. As a wild stock, when a sprig of good fruit is grafted in it, bringeth forth fruit according to the nature of the tree from which the graft was taken, and not such as the stock would have borne if it had not been grafted; so doth the wild stock of our old Adam, when the will and commandment of God, by the hand of the Spirit, is grafted on it, bring forth fruit after the will of God, and not after our own natural will. The occasional and particular commands of Christ, for such a time and upon such occasions, must be obeyed, no less than universal and perpetual commands, and the transgression of such commands is no less dangerous in the sad effects which it produceth. The examples of Abraham, (Gen. xxii.); of Moses, (Num. xx. 8); of Saul, (1 Sam. vx.); of Ahab, (1 Kings xx.); of the two men, whereof the one did wound, the other refused to wound the prophet, (1 Kings xx.); of Jehu, (2 Kings x.); of Amaziah, (2 Chron. xxv.); and of many others, are evi-

dences of this truth. My humble desire therefore, and earnest exhortation is, that in your great wisdom, ye may consider what the Lord requireth of you at this time; and in your zeal set yourselves to the performance thereof, without discouragement or delay, against all difficulties. Although you should be tossed with waves and contrary winds at the command of Christ, yet in the fourth watch he shall come to you and comfort you, and in the end shall bring you safe to the shore. Do not that which seemeth good in your own eyes, but obey his voice. Add not to the law nor detract from it, but do all that is written, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left. And because nothing doth the Lord at this time more require, than the reformation of religion, which is long and earnestly expected at your hands by all the godly; go about it speedily, and put it not off upon carnal reason or worldly respects. We do distinguish betwixt open hostility and secret treachery; but we are also to distinguish betwixt profane policy and pious prudence. As the work of God is opposed by open hostility, and which is more dangerous, by secret treachery; so is it hindered by carnal reason and worldly policy. Men may apprehend, that if they should settle religion presently, many would fall off, and your affairs would not succeed so prosperously. But I believe the contrary to be true, that the policy which Jeroboam, and the Jews used in the time of Christ (John xi.), a case not unlike unto ours, brought this same very evil upon them, which they feared, and did endeavour to avoid by their policy. Luther used to say that three things would prove mighty hindrances to Christian religion. 1. Forgetfulness of the work of God. 2. Security, which he found prevailing already in his time, and 3. Policy and worldly wisdom, which would bring all things in order, and cure the public stirs with the counsel of man: to determine the present controversy by human reason, was in his judgment to go mad with reason. Hezekiah was not guided by policy in his reformation, but removed the high places, and brake the

images, and cut down the groves, and broke in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made; for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it, and he called it Nehushtan, (2 Kings xviii. 4). This he did in the first year of his reign, in the first month, and suddenly, (2 Chron. xxix. 3, 36). He cared neither for the Philistines, nor the king of Assyria, both of them rising against him, nor for the idolaters in the land, but, which was all his policy, he trusted in the Lord God of Israel, (2 Kings xviii. 5).

Some conceive that because I am a stranger, I may speak more freely than others; but for this very cause that I am a stranger, I am the more sparing in my expressions; yet this much I may say, that there be three things which seem very strange to me. 1. That any should be found to speak against all the Reformed Churches, and to draw disciples after them, unless they had great evidence of scripture, or convincing reasons for the innovations which they would introduce. 2. Although some such arise, yet it is a wonder that so intelligent a people should be carried away with every wind, and scattered into so many sects and divisions, which is a great scandal to religion, a great sin and shame to such a people, a spiritual judgment in itself, and the cause of many other judgments, spiritual and temporal, and an argument that this miserable war is not yet drawing to an end. 3. That reformation is suspended, because the people are distracted; reformation being the only means to reduce them to unity.

USE 3. The third duty which I recommend, is confidence in Christ against doubting. This was the apostle Peter's weakness, both at this time and afterward, that he doubted, and was afraid, which made him begin to sink; and there can be no full and thorough obedience without faith and confidence. Two things are necessary for this: 1. Self-denial, and renouncing all confidence in yourselves, or your own wisdom, courage, strength, or multitudes, all which are but the arm of flesh, (Psalm xlv. 3-8). Wisdom will have us to use all good means, but faith will not

have us to trust in them. 2. A firm persuasion, and full relying upon Christ, holding the eye of our soul upon him continually. John the Baptist (John iii. 33) useth two words to express the nature of faith and confidence. One is קבל Syr. *קבלה* Cabala, the word of receiving, which in the Syriac is not every receiving, but a receiving of a doctrine sent from God, as divine, and sent from him. The other word is more, חסות Syr. : *Obsignavit, conclusit*, hath set to his seal. When the word is used of God towards us, we know the meaning, but when it is ascribed unto us in relation to God and his truth, it expresseth the resting of our conscience on the truth of God; that as the Lord sealeth his testimony unto us by the sacraments, and by his own Spirit, so upon our part, our faith and assurance sealeth the truth of God, that we acquiesce in it, and close with God, and the matter is concluded betwixt the Lord and our souls. The writing thus sealed cannot be reversed, for while the seal is at it, it abides firm, and the seal is kept by the Lord's faithfulness, for our benefit. This confidence will make us submit to the will of God, and to say, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me. He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness. Then she that is mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her, which said unto me, Where is the Lord thy God? (Mic. vii. 9, 10). "Woe is me for my hurt; my wound is grievous: but I said, Truly this is a grief, and I must bear it," (Jer. x. 19). This will carry us through all discouragements, because it maketh us to see greater things than the world. It opposeth the wrath of God against the terrors of the world, and the love of God against the love of the world. This assureth us of the presence of Christ in all our troubles, "It is I, be not afraid;" the most terrible word to the enemy, and the most comfortable to the godly. It persuadeth us, that God cannot deny himself, nor forsake his own cause; and for ourselves, that although this life and

all things in it should fail us, yet our happiness waits for us. "Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth ; my flesh also shall rest in hope," (Psal. xvi. 9). Much might be spoken here, and to good purpose, of the notes whereby to try our faith and confidence, whether it be weak or strong, and of the means to increase it, that it may come to a full assurance ; but I have troubled you too much already, and therefore I shall only desire that the recent proof of the mercy of God in our deliverance may be added to your calendar of former deliverances, to make your experience the stronger, that your hope and confidence may be the stronger for all time to come.

AN EXCELLENT ALLEGORY,

Taken forth of this History by Augustine, in his 14th Sermon, upon the words of our Lord.

As Christ going to the mountain to pray, gave commandment to his apostles, to get into a ship, and to go to the other side ; so after his ascending into heaven, at his commandment the gospel was to be carried through the sea of this world. As the ship wherein the apostles of Christ were passengers, meeteth with a great tempest ; so the church of Christ sustaineth waves of persecution, and is opposed by the various blasts of heretical winds. As the disciples do not straightway forsake the ship, but did toil in rowing ; so the confession of our faith is not to be forsaken, but the teachers of the church, both by word and writing, in the midst of the contrary winds of the world, and of the blasts of tumultuous heretics, are to discharge their office faithfully. Let the cross-yard be set up, and Christ crucified, be looked upon, and let us not make defection from him, but follow his steps ; let us through suffering and death itself press toward eternal glory. Let also white sails, that is, a pure and honest conversation be laid

hold of. Moreover, although the sea do rage, the wind withstand strongly, and the surges rise and make a noise, so that the ship be sore tossed and covered with the waves, yet is she not drowned but runneth to the haven: so may indeed the church be pressed, but can never be oppressed, for Christ is praying on high, and beholdeth his own, mightily wrestling with the contrary winds; he therefore intercedeth for them, that their faith fail not, but that they may carry unto the nations these noble, but to human reason, foreign wares of remission of sins, and the kingdom of heaven, through faith in Christ freely offered to all that earnestly repent and amend their lives. Furthermore, this small ship shall be tossed, and float on the water, till the Lord come, who alone is able to make a weighty body to walk upon the face of the liquid element, which shall come to pass about the fourth watch of the night, that is, in the end of time, when the night of this world is almost spent. In the meanwhile, although the roaring sea do murmur and repine under the feet of the Lord, yet nilling willing, it is constrained to bear him; so although the swelling pride and powers of the world arise together never so high, yet our Head shall trample on their head. But when Christ cometh near unto the ship, before he be clearly seen and known of his own, he striketh their hearts with a new terror, that they seem to themselves to see a ghost: for in the darkness of this night we are not able rightly to understand the work of the Lord; but when the darkness is scattered, and all the storm calmed, we shall know him aright, and shall worship him as the true Son of God, our Redeemer and Saviour. It is our part who do live about the fourth watch, and upon whom the ends of the world are come (1 Cor. x. 11.), to provide, lest that by the sudden and unlooked for coming of the Lord, we be surprised and confounded; for as Christ in one moment, and with one thrust, brought the ship into the harbour, so before we can look about us or turn ourselves, eternity shall come upon us; for the elect's sake these days shall be shortened, (Matt. xxiv. 22).

A SERMON,

PREACHED BEFORE THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HOUSE OF
LORDS, IN THE ABBEY CHURCH AT WESTMINSTER,
UPON WEDNESDAY THE 28TH OF MAY, 1645.

BEING THE DAY APPOINTED FOR SOLEMN AND PUBLIC HUMILIATION.

BY ALEXANDER HENDERSON.

(DEDICATION).

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

NOT any desire or confidence of mine own, but submission and obedience, made me first preach, and now print this sermon. Not any opinion or esteem I have of it, but example and custom, have moved me to set some words before it. These have I directed generally to the Christian reader, that I may not only include the noble Lords of Parliament, if any amongst them shall be pleased to look this way; but may also invite all other Christian readers (and such I wish all readers to be) to bestow some of their most serious thoughts upon so precious and excellent a subject, as is the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; which is here but generally hinted and briefly touched, but is represented to the life in scripture, and to the full treated and debated by divines. Jesus Christ by virtue of the three offices of his prophecy, priesthood, and kingdom, is made unto us of God, "wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption." His sufficiency and suitableness to be

unto us a Saviour, consisteth in the dignity of his person, and in his willing undertaking and faithful administration of these his offices. The sum of the grace given us through communion with him, is comprised in these inestimable benefits. Without the one, he could not be a perfect Saviour; without the other, our salvation cannot be perfect. It hath been of old and is at this day a just complaint, that of the offices of Christ, his kingdom is least considered of, and most mistaken; which as it is dishonour to his name, so is it a mighty hinderance to the comfort of some, to the sanctification of others, and to the salvation of many, and is a main cause of the many disorders and scandals in the Church of Christ.

The Papists will have their Pope, by reason of the kingdom of Christ, to be the head and (which is the same) the king of the Church, and at least *in ordine ad spiritualia*, to be the head and king of the kings of the earth. A sect of politics, which subject religion to policy, and Christ to the world, will have the supreme civil power, at least *in ordine ad temporalia*, to be the head and king of the church; and both the one and the other do turn the kingdom of Christ into a worldly kingdom. Ignorant and carnal professors are content to be served with Christ, as a prophet to teach them, and a priest to satisfy and make intercession for them; but are not willing to serve Christ as their king, that he may rule over them. And many modest and peaceable Christians suffer themselves to be robbed or cozened, if not of the one half, yet of a necessary and large part of the kingdom of Christ, while they either satisfy themselves with the internal influence of Christ their head, upon their own spirits, or give way to such as for their own ends would have them believe, that the whole administration of the kingdom of Christ is internal; not distinguishing betwixt that which is spiritual, and that which is internal, nor considering the external administration of the kingdom of Christ, although it be in this world, yet to be spiritual and heavenly, and not of this world. Judicious

Martin Bucer in the beginning of the Reformation, wrote to pious Prince Edward VI., two books of church poliey, to which he prefixeth the title *De Regno Christi*, of the Kingdom of Christ. The complaints poured forth by him at that time against the wise men of this world, and the common sort of people, as enemies to Christ's kingdom, may be now renewed, and with new aggravations ; so rare a thing is it in any age to find a people disposed to receive the whole kingdom of the Son of God.

It should not seem strange, that formerly, such as desired to decline the one extreme of prelatical tyranny, having nothing to stay them in their way, nothing in the middle to rest upon and to associate themselves unto, did run to the other extreme of popular anarchy. But now when from the merey of God, by the advice of the Assembly and authority of Parliament, the case shall be changed and a remedy provided, the people of God will know where to fix their judgment and choice. Can any wise man imagine, that such a chaos of anarchy, libertinism, and popular confusion as now covereth the face of this kingdom, and wherein all errors and sects cover their heads under the Catholic buckler of independency, that such a *Tohu Vavohu* can be the face of the kingdom of Christ, or the work of the new creation, of which it may be said, "And God saw that it was good." Can any of the godly think that the kingdom of Christ draweth the minds of men from the humble exercise of faith, to the ambition of new and vain opinions ; that it transformeth religion into fancy, virtue into speculation, zeal into contention, truth into poliey, and charity into faction ? Doth not the present posture of religion, and the constitution of the church (which yet is not so independent, as it is by some desired to be) call as loud for a Reformation, and for settling of religion, as the former did, before a Reformation was begun ? And may we not say, that we have spent our strength in vain, and purchased our misery at a great preece, if we shall rest where we are, that is, in Independency ? I should not exceed, if I should say, were we all agreed in

all things, except in the point of Independency, we would quickly run again into divisions; and that nothing in a family, in a city, in a kingdom, in a state, or in a church, hath more need of Reformation than that independency which all men in all societies naturally love and seek after. The government of the church by subordination of assemblies hath endured much opposition and many trials, and is at this day set upon at all hands, yet is the proverbial speech of the Hebrews verified concerning it, *Myrtus stans inter urticas, myrtus tamen est, et vocatur myrtus*, The myrtle standing amongst nettles, is for all that, the myrtle, and is so called; and necessity will drive all that love the preservation of religion and peace of the church unto this shelter and sanctuary at last, although in fair weather some kick against it, and would not only pull at the branches, but pluck it up by the roots. When after all these tempests and troubles the kingdom of Christ is uniformly settled in the land, Christ Jesus will be seen in his beauty and strength, his people will be filled with truth and peace, and the instruments of so good a work, especially such as remove impediments out of the way, shall against all envy and emulation have their own testimony and honour; according to the Hebrew sentence, *Nisi ipse elevasset lapidem, non fuisset inventa sub eo hæc margarita*, If the stone had not been lifted, the pearl had not been found under it.

SERMON.

“Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

“Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.”—
JOHN xviii. 36, 37.

IT is acknowledged, and universally confessed, that justice or righteousness is a noble and most excellent virtue. When the dispute was betwixt justice and fortitude, righteousness and courage, whether of the two should have the first place, both of them being most noble virtues, justice was preferred, because courage without justice is of no use; but if all men were just, there should be no need of courage or fortitude. This justice is a constant and perpetual will of giving unto every one his due: it rendereth to the inferior what is due to him, to the equal what he ought to have, and to the superior, but most of all to God, and to his Son Jesus Christ, who are supreme, what belongeth to them. There be in these days many complaints of the want of military skill and courage for the truth and cause of God; but the complaint of the want of justice is more just, for if all men were just, the former complaint would be silenced. And there be many complaints of inferiors, of equals, and of superiors, that they receive not that which belongeth unto them; but the Son of God, who is supreme and sovereign above all, may more justly complain that he getteth not his right, which is the greatest injustice in the world, and the cause of so great injustice amongst men, and, therefore, the cause of the great wrath of God; which to deprecate

and to turn away we are humbled before God, and do afflict our souls this day. Oh that the conclusion might be a resolution in all, according to their places and callings, to render unto Christ his own right !

This parcel of scripture containing the answer of Jesus Christ unto Pilate, before whom he witnessed a good confession, holdeth forth his right ; for being accused by Pilate of the highest degree of ambition, sedition, and rebellion, and indeed of no less then *læse-Majestie*, he defendeth himself by discovering the causes of these tragedies, and by revealing the mysteries of his kingdom, confessing that he was indeed a king ; but withal, showing that his kingdom needed not to be formidable either to Pilate, to his master Tiberius, or to any in authority, because his kingdom was not of this world. This he maketh manifest from the common condition and manner of earthly kingdoms and kings, which have their soldiers and guards that fight for them, and defend them from violence ; but he maketh not use of any, this being the end of his kingdom, that the truth of the gospel may prevail and reign in the hearts and lives of men, against the tyranny of darkness and lies. Nor should it seem any thing strange, that he hath so many adversaries, and his kingdom findeth so great opposition in the world, there being so few, whether of the church or state, that submit themselves to be captived and ruled by the truth. None are subjects of his kingdom to obey his voice, but such as by regeneration are the children of the truth, which is parallel to what he saith, “ But wisdom is justified of her children,” (Matt. xi. 19).

There be four principal points aimed at in the text. First, the dominion and sovereignty of Christ : “ My kingdom.”

Secondly, the condition and quality of the kingdom of Christ, negatively expressed, as best serving his present intention : “ My kingdom is not of this world.”

Thirdly, the end and use of his kingdom ; that the truth may have place among the children of men for their salvation and eternal happiness : “ To this end was I born, and

for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."

Fourthly, the subjects of the kingdom of Christ ; such as hear the voice of Christ, and obey his will : " Every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice."

The knowledge of the first is necessary, that the Son of God may have his due, and we may be humbled for not rendering it unto him.

The knowledge of the second is necessary, that kings, princes, and great ones in the world, may have what is due unto them, lest from their unjust suspicions, and evil-grounded jealousies, they become enemies to the kingdom of Christ, and that they may be humbled for lodging any such thoughts or fears in their hearts.

The third is necessary to be known, that we may have the benefit intended for us in the gospel, and be humbled, that we have not endeavoured as we ought, to find the comfort and power of the truth in our hearts and lives.

And the fourth is necessary, that we may henceforth shew ourselves to be the children of truth, and willing subjects of the kingdom of the Son of God.

That Jesus Christ is not only our Prophet, revealing unto us the whole will of God, by the law discovering unto us our sin and wretchedness, and by the gospel righteousness and life ; and our Priest, by himself offered in a sacrifice, purging us from sin, and arraying us with long garments, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints : but that as our supreme Lord and King, by his mighty power and sovereignty, he ruleth in us and over us and conserveth and maintaineth our blessed estate thus revealed and purchased, against all enemies, is a truth as necessary for us to know, but never enough acknowledged, so very much insisted on in scripture, as may appear :

First, by the titles of honour and dignity put upon him ; a Commander, a Captain, a Ruler or Governor, a Prince, Michael the great Prince, a King, the Prince of the kings of the earth, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the

Lord of all. By these titles is he known in the way of eminence. What is most eminent in rulers, princes, or kings, all their excellencies, and flowers of perfection are most eminently and egregiously found in him ; in the way of negation, all their errors, infirmities and imperfections, which are many, and too many, are far from him, and in the way of causation, as they speak, for with him is the original and prime cause of all that is excellent in them.

Secondly, by the many great and glorious promises and prophecies of the kingdom of Christ, which cannot be reckoned up, so many are they, in this shortness of time ; and are to every one that readeth the prophecies of the Old Testament, so obvious.

Thirdly, the same is manifest by the administration and execution of his office, in giving laws unto his people, and executing them, in giving gifts unto his servants for the good of his people, in ruling his people by his word and Spirit, in defending and delivering them from their enemies, and in subduing and destroying their enemies in the end.

Fourthly, the same is evident also by the homage and honour which the whole church militant and triumphant give unto him. “ And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders : and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands ; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever,” (Rev. v. 11–13). It requireth an heart ready to indite, and a tongue as the pen of a ready writer, to set forth the praises of this king, (Psal. xlv. 1). Only three things I would say from the descriptions which we have in scripture. One is, that the kingdom of Christ was

first made known to the church when the promise was made to our first parents, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent," (Gen. iii. 15). The second is, that since that time, till this day, he hath been reigning in the midst of his enemies, not only after his coming in our flesh, but before the times of the patriarchs and prophets, and ever was known to the subjects of his kingdom. The third is, that his kingdom hath been sometimes more obscure and under a cloud, as in the times of the Old Testament; howsoever even then his hand was stretched out in delivering his people out of Egypt, in leading them through the wilderness, and possessing them in the land of promise. And at the time of his suffering, howsoever the beams of his brightness did shine through the dark cloud; at other times the lustre and brightness thereof, hath been more apparent, as at the time of his exaltation, "Thou art my Son, this day," this day of thy glorious resurrection, "have I begotten thee,"—fulfilled the decree, and declared thee to be the Son of God. A commentary whereof we have, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father," (Phil. ii. 9–11). And "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men," (Ephes. iv. 8). These were his servants who were sent forth to preach and proclaim him to be king. And although men ought to be sparing in determining the manner, the measure, the time, and endurance of a greater glory of the kingdom of Christ on earth to come; yet have we reason to hope for great things at the bringing in of the ancient people of God, but ought so to hope for it, that for the present we may behold Christ reigning in his spiritual kingdom, and to take heed that the expectation of that which is future, be not a prejudice to that which is present, and is come to pass in our days more than in former times.

Some perhaps may think that this is no great matter, or deep mystery ; since no man can acknowledge Christ to be the eternal Son of God, but he must also confess that he is King and Lord, and that all honour and titles of honour are due unto him. To which I answer, first, that there be many, whatsoever for their credit they may profess to the contrary, who do not in their hearts believe that the Lord God, as a great King, ruleth the world ; for they fight against the light of nature, and abuse their power and policy no less than if they could rule the world without God : “ God is not in all their thoughts,” (Psal. x. 4). Secondly, a man may know that God is King and Ruler, and yet be ignorant that Christ, God and man, is King. Nature which teacheth that there is a Godhead, leadeth also to a providence ; but the other is a grand mystery, which cannot be conceived but supernaturally. Thirdly, we are to understand that Christ hath a twofold right unto his kingdom ; one by nature, as he is God ; the other by donation, as he is man. “ To me is given all power in heaven and in earth,” so that the man Jesus Christ, which is a great mystery, and which the world believeth not, hath prerogative and power above all creatures in earth and in heaven, above all nobles, princes, and kings ; and, which is more, above all angels, principalities, and powers.

Having thus shown that Christ hath a kingdom, which made him to say, “ *My kingdom,*” I would now make some use of this point ; but that I conceive it to be more convenient, first to speak of the quality of the kingdom of Christ, and having joined both together, that he is a king, and that his kingdom is not of this world, to give the uses of both at once.

The quality then of the kingdom of Christ, negatively is this, that his kingdom is not of this world ; it is not an earthly or worldly kingdom, and therefore by consequence must be a spiritual and heavenly kingdom. As it is a kingdom, it hath many things common with the kingdoms of the world ; both the one and the other are of God, both for

God and his glory, both for the good of the people. This being a perpetual difference between a tyrant and a king, that a tyrant conceiveth the people to be for him and his ends; but a king knoweth that he is set over the people for their good; both have their laws, and rule by them; both have their enemies, which oppose and disturb their peace. But this is the great difference, that the kingdom of Christ is not of this world. For first, Christ being called before Pilate, and being demanded whether he was a king, answered, that his kingdom was not of this world, therefore his kingdom is not a temporal and earthly kingdom, nor would Pilate have pronounced him innocent and guiltless, if he had made any claim to Cæsar's kingdom. This is very strongly proved by the following words, "If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews;" which yet maketh nothing against the taking of arms by such as are in authority for the defence of religion, and the just liberty of the professors thereof. Secondly, Christ refused to be a king, when it was offered unto him, and told his disciples, That the kings of the nations have dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority, but that it should not be so with them, but that whosoever would be great among them must be their minister, (Matt. xx. 26). Thirdly, he refused to be a judge of secular quarrels, or a divider of inheritances, (Luke xii. 14). He came from heaven for things divine, to work upon the consciences of men, and was appointed to be judge of quick and dead, but never meddled with the office of a temporal king. Fourthly, he acknowledged that Cæsar was king, saying, "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." Nor did the prophets prophesy of any earthly kingdom of Christ. For the kingdom that they prophesied of, was to be established and confirmed by him; but the kingdom of Judea was ruined and overthrown for refusing him to be their spiritual king: "There shall not a stone be left upon a stone in Jerusalem," the chief city of that kingdom, "because thou knewest

not the time of thy visitation," saith Christ. This yet appeareth further if we consider the qualities of these two kinds of kingdoms more particularly. The kingdoms of the world endure but for a time, and the periods and endings of them are matter not only of discourse before they come, but of tragedies after they are come; but the kingdom of Christ shall not be destroyed for ever: "And of his kingdom there shall be no end," (Dan. ii. 44). After his departure out of the earth, his kingdom was in the greatest strength and in a most flourishing condition; he then was gloriously manifested to be a king. The kingdoms of the world are governed by the rules and counsels of human prudence and policy, but the kingdom of Christ, by laws of another kind; by the simplicity of the gospel, which to the natural man is foolishness. The kingdoms of the world are supported by taxes and tributes, cessments and subsidies; but no such thing in the kingdom of Christ. The kingdoms of the world consist in riches, honour, power of men, external splendour, and earthly greatness; but in the kingdom of Christ, poverty and humility triumph over the world, under the standard of the cross. The kingdoms of the world have carnal weapons and strength of arms to pursue their ends; but the weapons of the kingdom of Christ are spiritual, to procure spiritual obedience unto him.

Many such differences may be observed, by which we may clearly perceive that the kingdom of Christ is not of this world. Yet one thing we must remember for preventing mistakes, and which being rightly taken and understood, would put an end to many of the questions which are so much debated at this time, about church government. It is this, that we are to distinguish between that which is of this world, and that which is external and visible in this world. The kingdom of Christ is not of this world, yet some part of this kingdom is external and visible in this world: for there be two parts of the spiritual administration of Christ's kingdom; the one is the internal operation of the Spirit, accompanying the external means, which are

his ordinanees, appointed by himself and his own authority ; the other is the external dispensation of these means and ordinanees by such officers as are ealled the ministers of the kingdom of heaven. This doth appertain to the kingdom of Christ, and shall continue no less than the former, till he render up the kingdoms unto God the Father, (1 Cor. xv. 24). This part of the administration of Christ's kingdom, although it be external, yet it is not of this world, but spiritual ; for it comes from the Spirit, and is done by the gifts of the Spirit. The word and sacraments, which are the matter of it, are things spiritual ; for the manner of doing it is by the evidenee of the Spirit ; the spirits and souls of men are the object of it ; the end thereof is spiritual edification, and the effect the ministry of the Spirit. So that in this respect also, the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, but a spiritual kingdom in both parts of the administration thereof.

The text thus expounded, is a fountain full of springs of doctrine. As first, that although Christ was a king, a governor and commander, as hath been formerly showed, and was a prophet also, and it may be, now exercising that office, and testifying of his own kingdom before Pilate ; yet it is no warrant for eaptains or commanders to preach the gospel, and to become prophets : because first, he was a spiritual king and commander, and not a temporal, and next, because he had a special calling. The apostle (Rom. x. 15) telleth us, that men cannot preach unless they be sent. And this calling the apostle judgeth to be so necessary, that the Son of God would not undertake the charge without a singular vocation, (Heb. v.). Although a private man who runneth unsent, and an ambassador who is authorized and sent, speak the same things, yet the one wants the authority which the other hath.

Secondly, although Jesus Christ knew well, that all that he could say, was not able to deliver him from death, or to do any good to the heart of Pilate for his conversion, yet he findeth himself bound to answer calumnies and unjust ac-

cusations, and to give a testimony of the truth. And so must the servants of God do ; although their words do no more but serve to blindfold and obdure blind and hard hearts, yet must they speak out the truth. It was the practice of the prophets, apostles, and holy martyrs ; and in this as in other things, ministers, and all others who have by their place any calling to give testimony to the truth, must do their duty, committing the event unto God.

Thirdly, although Christ at this time was brought very low in the eyes of the world, yet he spareth not to speak of his kingdom and to call himself a king. Humiliation and exinanition is in itself no derogation to right, but the right is the same in the estate and case of humiliation, and in the estate and case of exaltation ; the ease may change, and the estate be altered, but the right is without change, and standeth unalterable. So was it with Christ, and so is it in the cause of Christ, with the church of Christ, and every believing soul.

Fourthly, as there be many things that are of this world, so there be other things that be not of this world ; a truth which all will acknowledge in respect of this world and the world to come ; but it holdeth also in this present world, wherein there be some things that are of it, and some things that are in it, but not of it. The kingdom of Christ, which hath many mysteries, many parts, many privileges, many laws, many subjects, is of this kind. The natural man seeth no more in the world, than what he conceiveth to be of the world ; but the spiritual man judgeth all things. And what the eye of the natural man seeth not, what his ear heareth not, and what his reason understandeth not, because it is spiritual and cannot be discerned but spiritually, that the spiritual man perceiveth, and receiveth with all his heart, and is no less assured of the infallibility thereof, than of what he perceiveth by sense or reason : he knoweth what he believeth, and that he is not deceived about it.

But passing over all these, and other the like particu-

lar doctrines, which cannot at this time be prosecuted, I come to the necessary uses of that main and principal doctrine intended in the text, and laid open by that which hath been spoke, that Christ Jesus the Son of God hath a kingdom in this world, and that this kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, and not of this world.

The first use shall be for information in the point of agreement and difference betwixt civil and ecclesiastical power ; the kingdoms of this world, and the kingdom of Christ, the magistracy and the ministry.

First, both the one and the other is from God. In the state there be superiors and inferiors ; the Lord who hath appointed in nature the tall cedar and the low shrub growing at the root of it, the elephant and the mole, the eagle and the wren, the great leviathan and the smaller fishes, hath also in policy appointed kings, princes, and nobles, to rule and govern, and others of lower condition to honour and obey. In the church, some to teach and rule, and others to be taught and ruled by them.

Anabaptists (I speak of such as are not novices, but are acquainted with the depths of the profession) and other such masters of confusion, do not distinguish betwixt the common and particular vocations of Christians ; betwixt a Christian equality, and a civil or ecclesiastical inequality. All Christians having alike precious faith, in respect of their common dignity and vocation, as they are Christians and are in Christ, are equal amongst themselves ; there is neither master nor servant, bond nor free, king nor subject, pastor nor people, but all are one in Jesus Christ : but this hindereth not an inequality in civil or ecclesiastical respects. God who hath appointed them to be equal the one way, hath also appointed an inequality amongst them the other way. Notwithstanding this agreement betwixt the magistracy and ministry in respect of their author, yet is there here also some difference betwixt the one and the other ; for magistracy proceedeth from God the Creator and Ruler of the world, and therefore doth belong unto, and is to be

found amongst all sorts of people in all nations that live in any civil society ; but the ministry is the ordinance of Christ the mediator, and hath not place but in the church of Christ. Again, magistracy and civil government in the general is from God, and is ordained of him, but the particular different forms of civil government are from men, and yet all of them lawful ; whence it followeth, that civil power is not absolute but limited, first, by the will of God whose minister the magistrate is, and next, by such laws and limitations as are agreed upon to be the foundation of that power. It is not so with the ministry, for not only is the ministry in the general the ordinance of Christ, but all the special kinds of ministers are appointed by him. A human creature in the state is not unlawful ; but to be, or appoint a human creature in the church, is unlawful,—a difference which politics and churchmen who love pre-eminence above their brethren, are never enough moved to acknowledge. Nor have the ministers of Jesus Christ any limitation from men ; all their limitation is from Jesus Christ whose ministers they are.

There is also a second thing wherein the magistracy and the ministry do agree. It is true, indeed, that the magistrate is more about things external, which concern this present life, and the minister about things spiritual, which concern the soul and life eternal. Yet is there nothing so ecclesiastical, but it belongeth some way to the magistrate, he being keeper of both tables ; nor is there any thing so secular, but it concerneth the ministry, in so far as secular things fall under obedience or disobedience to God ; for the word of God is extended to all causes, all persons, all conditions of life, all which are to be ruled by the word. And this word is to be expounded, and must be particularly applied by the ministry. But while both are about the same things, causes, and persons, it is in a very different way : the power of the one is but ministerial, and the weapons of his warfare are spiritual, not carnal ; but the power of the other, though in respect of God, whose minister he is, it be ministerial, yet in

respect of his subjects and inferiors, it is magisterial, and hath authority to compel and coerce. The magistrate may not go to the pulpit to preach or minister the sacraments, nor may he, as he is a magistrate, exercise ecclesiastical discipline; but ought by his authority to command all these necessary duties to be done. And the minister may not ascend to the tribunal to judge civil or criminal causes; yet ought he to teach, and in the name of God exhort that justice be done to all, by which every one may have that which is due unto him. We may say with Bernard, that the church hath two swords, the spiritual and the temporal, but in a different sort, the use of the spiritual and the benefit of the temporal. We may also say that the civil power hath two swords, the temporal and the spiritual, but in a different manner, the use of the temporal and the benefit of the spiritual. When these two swords are put in good hands, and wisely managed, it goeth well both with church and state, with truth and peace, with religion and righteousness. The magistracy and the ministry are not unfitly compared to the two principal faculties of the soul of man, the will and the understanding. Man being as well a republic as a little world, the will of man hath two acts; one, which is her proper and essential operation, is called *actus elicited*, as to will, to nill, or to suspend; the other is called *actus imperatus*, produced by another power, whether of the body or of the soul, as by the understanding at the commandment of the will; for the will may command the mind or understanding, *quoad exercitium*, although not *quoad specificationem*. The magistrate hath *actum elicited*, as his proper operation, about civil matters, as his proper object, but in spiritual things not so. He may neither preach nor minister the sacraments, nor exercise discipline; yet hath he *actum imperatum*, he may and ought by his place to command ministers to do all these duties. And if he be negligent in this, he sinneth against God. Upon the other part, the minister may not judge civil or criminal causes, nor perform the proper offices of the civil power;

yet as the minister hath *actum elicitum* for performing of spiritual duties, so hath he, although not *actum imperatum*, yet *actum excitatum*, for exciting, and in the name of Christ exhorting and charging the civil powers to the performance of their duty.

This general use of doctrine may be brought nearer home, by the following use, which is for reproof of two main errors, which at this time make a great deal of trouble in the Christian world, and which being once removed, there might be greater peace and quietness in churches and commonwealths. The one is of the most unjust and tyrannous claim made by the pope, of temporal dominion over the whole world, or at least, to intermeddle with the affairs of princes and kingdoms in reference to the church, or as the papists express themselves, *in ordine ad spiritualia*. For the pope not contenting himself with the transcendency of ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the whole church, though he hath no warrant for it in his boundless and endless ambition, did climb yet higher; and partly by the favour, or foolishness rather, of Christian princes, and partly by his own fraudulent and violent dealing, as the son of him who hath been a murderer and a liar from the beginning, hath set himself up first amongst, and next over the greatest princes and mightiest emperors, to dispose of their crowns and dignities at his pleasure, which is the mark and character of him who is spoken of by the apostle, "Who sitteth in the temple of God as God, shewing himself that he is God, and opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God," (2 Thess. ii. 4). As the text sheweth, that Christ was no earthly king, that he left no regal power to Peter, and therefore the pope can have no temporal power as the vicegerent of Christ, so the supreme power to disposed of kingdoms and temporal things in reference to things spiritual, and the lawfulness of civil dominion, which the pope claimeth by the donation of princes, are overturned by the grounds laid in the text, "The kingdom of Christ is not of this world." About this point there be three

things which may astonish our hearts, and indeed are matters of admiration ; one is, the wonderful patience of God, suffering that man of sin so long to rage, and to be drunk with the blood of the saints, which should make us to say with the Spirit and the bride, “ Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly ;” the sins of that see are long since at the height, “ Lord, why tarriest thou ?” Never since the beginning of the world was there such an example of divine patience. Learned men have applied themselves to search into the causes of the so long continuance of the sect of Mahomet, and conceive that the detestation of idolatry, and of persecution of the gospel, are two principal causes thereof ; the contrary whereof is found in the Church of Rome, which makes the patience of God so much the more admirable. A second is, that He who calleth himself the servant of servants, doth make himself the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and yet the kings and lords of the earth do still give their strength and power to the beast, and lie under his yoke drunk with the wine of his fornications ; nor will they yet awake after so full a discovery of that mystery of iniquity, which is from the spirit of slumber in the justice of God possessing their spirits. And the third is, that such kings and kingdoms as are begun to hate the whore, and make her desolate and naked, do suffer themselves, by whatsoever tentations or worldly respects, to be divided or retarded in accomplishing the work. And here we have just reason to lament, that the work of God maketh so slow progress in this land. And it may be unto us this day just cause of deep humiliation, that our sins in former times, and since the beginning of this work of reformation, are such as make obstruction unto it. The Lord, I confess, hath done much already, especially in removing the prelates, and other members of that popish hierarchy, who had transformed the kingdom of Christ in this island into a worldly kingdom, very conform unto the pope the head of the hierarchy. In this England hath as great cause to rejoice as any nation under heaven, because never any nation

hath felt more of popish and prelatical tyranny than England, and that both of old and of late, witness your own histories.

There is also another error to be reproved, which is upon the other hand, and may be called a new papacy : the former error is Παπακαίσαρια, this Καισαροπαπία, which court-parasites, politicians, and such other enemies to the kingdom of Christ, would introduce into the reformed churches, ascribing to the highest civil authority, or to the supreme magistrate, the same place in the reformed church within his dominion, that the pope hath in the Roman church, and making him head of the church, by which the pope is changed, but not the papacy, the dominator but not the domination. Nor is there any difference, but 1. That this opinion maketh as many popes as supreme magistrates, which would cease if Cæsars or Emperors as of old did rule the world. 2. That it will be acknowledged that such civil popes are subject to error, which is no great difference, for the chiefest doctors in the Roman Church do admit that the pope may err, and for this cause will have him subject to general councils. For clearing of this great difficulty, and that we may give to Cæsar what is Cæsar's, unto Christ and his ministers what belongeth to them, we are to observe these three distinctions: 1. We are to distinguish times: in the times before the law, the civil and ecclesiastical power might be in one person, as in Melchisedeck, Job, &c.; not so after the law, when the republic and church of Israel were once constituted and settled. The Lord that maketh summer to succeed after winter, the day after the night, and youth after infancy would have it to be so. The saying of the wise physician, *Vindiceamus, quia ego non jussi*, belongeth to God in matters of this kind, *August. Epist. 5.* 2. We are to distinguish between cases: in extraordinary cases, and when the estate of the church was corrupt, many things were allowed or permitted, as in the times of Eli and Samuel, which in other cases were not lawful. 3. We are to distinguish betwixt the su-

preme civil power of the magistrate about matters of religion or things ecclesiastical, and the ultimate and highest jurisdiction ecclesiastical in matters of this kind, the one is not only lawful, but necessary, as a principal point of the magistrate's duty ; the other doth not belong to the magistrate, or any civil authority, but to the church and authority ecclesiastical. To assume ordinarily after religion is settled, the last resolution and highest jurisdiction ecclesiastical in matters of religion, unto which formal and legal appeals shall be made in church matters from the Assemblies of the church, is more, I hope, than needeth to be feared from the wisdom, piety, and justice of the honourable Houses of Parliament. They have in their great wisdom, piety, and justice, removed churchmen from their senate, and will neither have prelates nor pastors to sit with them in that supreme civil court. They have abolished high commissions and star-chambers, and therefore will not intermeddle, unless it be at extraordinary times and in extraordinary cases with church matters. It cannot be denied, but persons distressed by ecclesiastical jurisdiction, may by way of complaint, although not by way of accusation, express their unjust sufferings to whatsoever kind of persons, private or public, in church or state, and each one is to bear the burden of another. Much more therefore may they fly to the supreme civil authority, not to this end that the cause may be recognosced by them ; but if need be, and they find it necessary, they may desire, or command the same to be resumed and examined again of new. But this Christian way of complaining, maketh nothing for any formal or legal appeal from one kind of authority to another. Appellations must be from the inferior to the superior in the same kind.

Before I proceed there is one objection to be removed. If the power of the church be not above the state in civil matters, nor the power of the state above the church in matters of religion ; if the kingdoms of the world be not subordinate to the kingdom of Christ, and if the kingdom

of Christ be not subordinate to the kingdoms of the world, then it will follow that they are equal, that they are parallel and collateral; and therefore will be emulous and jealous one of another, and will strive one against another. For answer. This objection savoureth of much malice against the ministry of the gospel, and, which is suppressed, against the kingdom of Jesus Christ. It is not unlike the speech of the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin against the building of the temple at Jerusalem unto the Lord God of Israel: "This city is a rebellious city, and hurtful unto kings and provinces: it hath made insurrection against kings, and rebellion and sedition hath been made therein," (Ezra iv. 15). The practices of such are not unlike the practices of the enemies (Neh. iv.), who by craft, by rumours, and by hired prophecies, would have terrified Nehemiah and others that were with him, from building the walls of Jerusalem. Their calumnies are not unlike that of Haman, "There is a certain people scattered abroad, and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of the kingdom; and their laws are divers from all people, neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them," (Esther iii.). In a time of reformation, when the temples or walls of Jerusalem are to be builded, there be ever some Rehums, and Shimshais, some Sanballats, Tobiahs, Gashmues, or Hamans, that endeavour to hinder the work. It is a matter of humiliation, that there are any such in this land, and will prove greater matter of humiliation if they shall have their desire. But the wisdom and vigilancy of the honourable houses of Parliament, will take heed unto and note such unhappy instruments, that their wicked desires be not satisfied. It cannot be denied, but there is some kind of mutual and reciprocal subjection or subordination of the one authority and government unto the other; such as useth to be, and must needs be, in all such societies as have divers ends before their eyes. Those who command in respect of the one end, must obey in respect of the other; and such as obey in respect of the

one end, must command in respect of the other. When a company of soldiers entereth into a ship to fight against the enemy at sea, in so far as they are in the ship, and within board, they are to be governed by the master of the ship, who is to command all in matters of navigation ; but as they are soldiers fighting against the enemy, they must obey their own captain, and be directed by him. He that commanded in the one respect, although a general or a king, must obey in the other respect ; nor is it any derogation, but wisdom to do so. When the son is a consul, and the father a private man, the son obeyeth the father as his father, and the father obeyeth the son as his consul or magistrate. And thus in divers respects there is a mutual subordination, yet is there no such equality as to make the two governments jealous one of another ; for there is a three-fold difference betwixt them, which being well observed, will cure all this unnecessary and groundless jealousy. One is, in respect of God, to whom both are subject ; another, in that respect which the one of them hath to the other ; and the third is, in respect of the people concredited unto them. In respect of their subjection to God, the one is subject as a deputed and inferior lordship or dominion ; the other is subject as a ministry or service, Christ only being Lord of his Church : “ The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and they that exercise authority upon them, are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so,” (Luke xxii. 25, 26). Domination is forbidden church-men, ministration is commanded. It is one thing to be a viceroy, and another thing to be a legate or a steward. Christ hath legates to declare his will, but hath no deputies or vicegerents. In that respect which the one hath to the other, we may observe this difference, that the subordination of the minister to the magistrate, is to the magistrate himself, as to the vicegerent of God, of whose power he doth participate ; but the subordination of the magistrate to the minister, is not to the minister himself, but to Jesus Christ, whose servant he is. “ Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as

though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God," (2 Cor. v. 20). In respect of the people under their charge, every soul is subject to the higher powers, but the church only is subject to the ministry, they have nothing to do with those who are without; and which is a main difference, the flock under their charge is dealt with by them, not by way of command, or compulsion, but by moving, entreating, and persuading them to receive the commandments of Christ. They are therefore no other than firebrands, and instruments of division, that would raise jealousies of this kind betwixt these two kinds of government, both of which are appointed of God to serve for the good of the people of God, each in its own way. Whatsoever hath been or can be spoken against church-government, may as well be spoken against the gospel and kingdom of Christ; and the contest is not properly betwixt the magistracy and the ministry, or betwixt civil and ecclesiastical authority, but betwixt the kingdoms of this world and the kingdom of Christ, which is a great unhappiness, and the cause of a world of miseries unto the kingdoms of this world, wherein the ambition of churchmen transforming the kingdom of Christ into an earthly kingdom, and clothing the church with the pomp of the world, beareth a great part of the guiltiness. If both were kept within the just limits, and moved within their own spheres, their motions and influences might be comfortable to the souls and lives of the children of men.

I come now to the third use, which is correction, against such as say with those citizens, "We will not have this man to reign over us," (Luke xix. 14). There be many divers sorts of enemies in the kingdom of Christ that say so; some open and professed enemies, such as are Pagans, Jews, and Turks; some more secret and dissembled enemies, who under the pretence of the doctrine of Christ, oppose him and his kingdom, such as have been false Christs, and are this day antichrist, with all his members and followers, heretics, schismatics, politicians, and all worldly and

mere natural men. And there be many sundry causes that draw them into by-paths, and make them run into errors greater or lesser. But it may be confidently avouched that the main cause by which Satan prevaleth upon the corrupt heart of man, to make him an enemy to Christ and his kingdom, is the dislike he hath of this principle and fundamental of Christian religion, "That the kingdom of Christ is not of this world." All men naturally love the world, and the things of the world, which are the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life; and finding that the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, nor doth promise unto them the things of this world, but that it is a spiritual kingdom, binding up their spirits, and interdicting their hearts the love of the world, it must of necessity follow, unless the power of the Spirit of Christ shine in their minds and work upon their hearts, that either in profession, or in heart, or both, either more or less, they prove enemies unto Christ, especially in that which would break the bond that tieth them fast to the world. If men might be pleased to examine themselves narrowly, and descend into their own hearts, they would find that their hearts deceive them; and while they seem to others and to themselves to be despisers of the world, they are either by covetousness or vain-glory, or love of carnal liberty, or some other such tie, entangled and kept fast by the world, and are either, directly or indirectly, drawn to oppose the kingdom of Christ. He that will consider the grounds of Paganism, Judaism, and Turkism, and for what reason they do not receive Christ when he is offered unto them, shall find this to be a principal cause. He that will search into the histories of particular heresies and schisms will often meet with this, and find the world in the bottom of the hearts of men. I do not speak of the simple seduced people, but of the wisest and most learned of their seducers, and of the great wits of the world, which make the world their idol and bow down before it.

But leaving this, I come to the fourth use for instruction

in such duties as are required of us all at this time, and after a special manner of those that are in high places. First of all, seeing the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, but is a spiritual kingdom, it is a necessary duty to study the nature, and search into the mysteries and secrets of this kingdom. The kingdom of Satan and sin have many depths and secrets, the kingdoms of the world have their secrets of policy and government, and the kingdom of Christ hath greater secrets, and more hid mysteries. Great ones in the world know many things of the mystery of iniquity, and of the secrets of kingdoms and states of the world ; but the truth is, many of them are ignorant of the mysteries of the kingdom of Christ. The princes of this world, whether princes for knowledge, as the philosophers were, or for power and greatness, as the nobles and great ones be, do not know those mysteries, for had they known them, "they would not have crucified the King of glory." But as it is written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him," which the apostle speaketh of the kingdom of grace in this world, (1 Cor. ii. 8, 9). Natural reason calleth for fit instruments for every work, and the matter well prepared to work upon ; but the apostles were neither noble nor learned, but poor and simple altogether, and the world indisposed to receive them, being at that time, as much as at any time before or since, full of learning, of power, and of policy ; yet they went on, subduing, conquering, and bringing all unto the obedience of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The laws of this kingdom were, instead of revenge, "love your enemies ;" instead of lust, "look not on a woman to lust after her ;" instead of covetousness, "forsake all ;" instead of ambition, "deny yourselves." And yet the supernatural laws, by the spirit and power of the great Lawgiver, were settled and written in the tables of men's hearts. The promises of reward were, not worldly pleasures, or ease, but "let every man take up his cross and follow me." All things in this kingdom were

above the reach of natural reason ; yet the spiritual man by a new faculty created of God, knoweth the deep things of God, and judgeth all things. Some divines have observed seven things in the passion of Christ, altogether contrary to the judgment of the natural man : the great impotency and weakness in him who was omnipotent : the greatest suffering in that which was impassable : the greatest foolishness (according to the judgment of men) in the deepest wisdom : greatest poverty in the God of all riches : greatest shame in the greatest glory and majesty : greatest dereliction and forsaking in the most perfect union ; and great severity of the Father against his Son, in the greatest love of the Father to the Son, in the very time of his suffering. Many more might be added in the administration of the kingdom of Christ after his ascension into heaven, both at the first planting of the gospel in the primitive times, and in the time of reformation of religion in divers kingdoms and nations. And therefore as natural sense correcteth the errors of our imagination, and maketh us see the folly of our fancies ; and as natural reason correcteth the errors of our sense, and maketh us judge otherwise than our sense teacheth ; so must the divine power, and superior faculty of faith, correct the errors of our natural reason. If we will acquaint ourselves with the secrets of the gospel, and with the proceedings of the kingdom of Christ, we begin no sooner seriously to think upon them, but we seem to ourselves to be transported and carried to another world, and are constrained to acknowledge and confess to the glory of God, that flesh and blood doth not reveal these things unto us.

The second duty required of us, is this : When the Lord hath opened the eyes of our understanding to behold somewhat of the secrets of this spiritual kingdom, we are to draw near, to join ourselves unto it, and become the subjects of Jesus Christ. To which purpose, it is necessary to express the matter briefly, that we first know our state by nature, all of us by nature being subjects, yea, slaves to the king-

dom of sin and Satan ; no man is excepted, kings, princes, nobles, as base slaves this way as any other, although walking in gold chains. Next, that we acknowledge Christ to be King and Lord of his people, putting our confidence in him, as having all sufficiency for life, liberty, salvation, and every good thing, yea, endeavouring to feel the kingdom of God within us, and his sceptre set up in our souls formerly tyrannised over by strange lords. And thirdly, that we make a resignation of ourselves in all humility and obedience to do his will : for it is the quality of his subjects to be a willing people, or a people of willingness, (Psal. cx. 3). If every one of us had many wills, we ought to sacrifice them all, and turn each one of them into a willingness to serve him. According to this is it, that his people are called “ Ammi-nadib,” or my willing people, (Cant. vi. 12). The word used to express willingness, signifieth generosity or nobleness, opposed to churlishness, (Isa. xxxii. 5). “ The vile person shall be no more called libera!, nor the churlish said to be bountiful,” Nabal shall not be called Nadib. The true subjects of Christ, were they never so meanly born, although like the wretched infant described Ezek. xvi., yet being born again, they deal nobly with him ; but others, whatsoever be their extraction, and were they never so nobly descended, they deal but churlishly with Christ. A nobleman that giveth not himself willingly and cordially to the Son of God, and accounteth it not his chiefest honour to be a subject of his kingdom, in scripture language is not a nobleman, but a Nabal, a churl ; and surely to deal churlishly with Christ, who hath been so benign and bountiful unto us, and is so worthy to be served, is the most base churlishness, and the greatest churlishness in the world. If we would consider what we are without him, what we may be through him, and that there is a necessity either to be the slaves of sin, or to become the subjects of Christ ; yea, either to be his free subjects or his bound slaves and captives, we would willingly offer ourselves in this day of his power.

The third duty is, when we are acquainted with the nature and secrets of the kingdom of Christ, and are now become his willing subjects, then to be zealous in using all good means, each one according to his place, for advancing and establishing the kingdom of Christ. A point very necessary to be considered, because as Herod and all Jerusalem with him, were troubled when they heard that the king of the Jews was born ; so are great ones that are in authority, and the multitude of the people, much troubled when they hear of the kingdom of Christ ; kings and great ones, because they conceive the advancing of Christ's kingdom to be a diminution of their greatness and power, wherein they bewray both their ignorance and ingratitude : ignorance of the nature of his kingdom, which is spiritual, not only in the internal but external part of it. He that would establish a spiritual kingdom, doth not take away, but on the contrary doth both confirm and sanctify the temporal kingdom wherein it is estallished. The Son of God never imposed such a hard condition to kings and nobles that were to become Christians, as to forsake their crowns and dignities, except in their affection, and in comparison of the excellency of the kingdom of Christ. Ingratitude, not only because by him kings reign, but Jesus Christ having proclaimed a jubilee, a great liberty to kings and kingdoms from the tyranny, the servitude, the usurpations and impositions of the Pope, this is all the thanks that they return, that they either put away the gospel from themselves and their kingdoms, or will receive but so much of it as they think meet ; which is rather to reign over Christ, than that Christ by his sceptre reign over them. As for the multitude of the people, they have no desire to hear of the setting up of the kingdom of Christ, because they are afraid of poverty, and other such miseries as may be brought upon them by innovations, measuring all by their worldly gain and ease, and considering no other ways of changes but as they import some earthly benefit to their own private. So was Jerusalem troubled when Christ was born,

and so were the Gadarenes when he came into their country. It cannot be denied but the Lord hath done a great work in this land, yet there be many of all ranks that wish it had never been begun, by reason of the troubles and losses they have sustained ; not considering nor knowing that a little of God and of Christ, and of his Spirit, and of the Word, and of the ordinances, is much more than the greatest things of the world ; and that it is better to suffer with the people of God and for God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. When things are equally balanced, the worst things of Christ, that is, his cross and sufferings, are better than the best things of the world. Upon the contrary, therefore, I shall desire these seven things about the kingdom of Christ, and the matter of religion may be diligently taken heed unto.

1. Take heed of self-respects : these are of two sorts, one is private, when men look so much to themselves, that they forget the public ; or if they look to the public, and seem to be zealous about it, it is always with reflection upon their own private : were the circumference never so wide, themselves are the centre, and all the lines of their actions have their concentration there. Private spirits are evil spirits, whether they be in Church or Parliament ; and I may add, that they are foolish spirits, seem they never so wise ; for being once embarked, how shall they hope to escape if the public shall perish ? Another sort of self-respect is public, which may seem a paradox, and yet it is a certain truth, when men would draw all to the Parliament, not only *negotia Regis et Regni*, the matters of the king and kingdom, but *negotia Jehovæ et Ecclesiæ*, the matters of God and the Church. Many things indeed may, yea must be done *pro tempore*, and in this corrupt state of the church ; but it is the worst kind of sacrilege to take the power which Christ hath given to the church, and put it in the hands of the state.

2. Beware of lukewarmness and indifferency in matters of religion, that we be not like Gallio, “ that cared for none

of these things ;” or like Pilate in this place, who spoke so coldly of the truth, “What is truth ?” He declared by his question that it was a thing he cared not for ; or like Saul (1 Sam.), who when he had commanded to advise with the oracle of God what he should do, yet before he received an answer, led forth the army into battle. It is a rare thing in great men to take religion to heart, and to be solicitous about it. There may be here a twofold indifferency ; one is, when matters of religion come in debate, we care not what way they go, nor to what side they be determined. The other is, that having past an ordinance, we care not what become of it ; whether it be put in execution or not, or whether it be spoken or written against or not ; which is nothing else but a vilifying of the ordinance of God, and the prostituting of that authority which God hath put upon men unto contempt and reproach.

3. Take heed of division, the most destructive thing both to yourselves and the cause that can be. There be many causes of division from Satan, who is a factious and schismatical spirit ; from the world, which delighteth to run in divers channels ; and from ourselves, every man having a seed of division in his own heart. It is true, that all men by nature love unity as well as being ; for unity preserveth, but all men through the corruption of nature, incline to division and destruction. Yet there be some spirits whose predominant it is to be heretical, schismatical, and factious ; and it is as natural to such to delight in divisions, as it is for others to wallow in uncleanness or excess. If we will have the kingdom of Christ settled, these are to be noted, and either avoided or kept in order ; otherwise there will be no end of division in the state, and of schism in the church. And take heed of division from the kingdom of Scotland, with whom ye are so nearly united, both by nature and covenant. Were I there, I would say no less unto them in relation to this kingdom. There be some pernicious instruments, who busy themselves in fishing of faults, and use the damnable art of Tiberius. He was earnest to

have a virgin strangled, some mention particularly the daughter of Sejanus ; others, as Suetonius, more indefinitely speak it of virgins ; but because it was not lawful amongst the Romans to strangle a virgin, he will have them first defiled by the executioner, and thereafter strangled: *immaturæ puellæ, quia more tradito nefas esset virgines strangulari, vitiatæ prius a carnifice, dein strangulatæ*. I leave it to your own application. It is known amongst the people, that he that would kill his dog can easily find a staff ; and it is not unknown to the state, that they who would be rid of a good subject or servant, can easily lay treason to his charge. But so long as that nation abideth constant to the cause of God, and honest in their endeavours towards you, ought they to be so talked of as they are by many ? If in saving themselves and serving you, they should be disabled from saving themselves and serving you, ought ye to add affliction to the afflicted ? When the truth, which is the daughter of time shall appear, I hope men will be ashamed of their speeches and eat up their own words, and therefore I will speak no more of this sad subject.

4. Beware of delays and procrastinations in settling of Christ's kingdom. The setting up of the discipline and government of the church, had been a more easy work long ago than it is now, and is more easy now than it will be afterward. For the longer we go down by the river side, we shall find it grow the deeper and broader and parting itself in more divided channels. Had the discipline and government of the church been set up at first, it would have proved very serviceable to the parliament, and saved them much labour in the doing of their work. The ordinances of Christ have much power and strength in them, and they are accompanied with many blessings. The spiritual and secular arm, like the two arms of the body, when both are stretched out and exercised, are very effectual for the public good.

5. Beware of discouragements from the power of the world, the kingdoms of the world, or any other kinds of op-

positions whatsoever, while ye are about the building of the house of God, and establishing of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. If the enemies had been able to hinder it, it had never found any settling on earth. Principalities and powers in high places, the kingdoms of this world and the spirits of men, have been always bent against it ; no power, no plot or policy, hath been or will be unassayed. Beside many particular hindrances of the settling of religion in particular places and nations, do but lift up your eyes and look back to the course of the world in the general. In the first monarchy we find a fiery furnace ; in the second, a den of lions ; in the third, the madness and fury of Antiochus, justly surnamed Epimanes, which exceeded the former two ; and in the fourth monarchy, the ten persecutions, ten times more bloody and grievous than all that went before. The kingdoms of this world are resembled by most bloody and monstrous wild beasts (Dan. vii.), and by mountains that are full of wild beasts, because of their craft and cruelty against the kingdom of Christ, (Psal. lxxvi. 4, Cant. iv. 8). But we may be comforted by that, "What art thou, O great mountain?" (Zech. iv. 7) ; and I may add, all ye wild beasts? Be not troubled with the fears of the kingdoms of the world, in building the kingdom of Christ. For my part, I think it nothing strange, that the world and the God of this world, stand in a continual opposition. It is a greater wonder that any, especially of great ones, are found to have any courage for the kingdom of Christ. It is a miracle which we hear of, "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard with the kid, and the young lion with the calf," &c. (Isa. xi.).

6. Take heed of imprudence in choosing and employing of instruments for the establishing the kingdom of Christ ; the greatest show and profession of zeal, is not always the program of the greatest zeal. As a man of a calm constitution may seem to have more patience than another, which yet is not patience, but mildness of temper ; so a choleric disposition may appear to be zeal, but it is only

a natural and earthly, not a spiritual and heavenly fire. Again, he that hath most true zeal and holiness to make him a spiritual soldier, hath not always the best abilities for a temporal war. It is a great mistake, and the mother of much confusion, to take grace for gifts, or gifts for grace. A man may have great gifts and abilities, which the Lord will bless for the benefit of his people, and yet have a small measure of grace for his own comfort and salvation. And a man may be a very gracious man, and yet have no more skill to be a good soldier, than to be a good shoemaker. It was said of old, that then it is well with kingdoms and commonwealths, when either philosophers reign, or they that reign are philosophers. We may say that it is a happy thing when such men are employed as have best gifts and grace, whether it be in the time of peace or war.

7. Take heed of fainting and wearying in setting up of the kingdom of Christ. The Lord hath made you instrumental in laying the foundation ; ye must persevere till the headstone be brought forth with shoutings, otherwise it will be said, that these kingdoms did begin to build, but were not able to finish the work. Sometimes weakness may appear in one army, and sometimes in another ; but the cause is the same, and with God Almighty there is no shadow of change ; his power is not greater one day than another, for the infiniteness of omnipotency admitteth of no degrees. Pilate protested three times that he found no fault in Christ, and endcavoured for satisfying his own natural conscience, to set him free ; but in end, lest he should be reputed an enemy to Cæsar, he delivered him to be crucified. Darius laboured all the day long, till the setting of the sun, to deliver Daniel ; but overcome with importunity, he condemned him at last to the den of lions. We may change, the kingdoms of the world may change, but the cause and truth of Christ abide the same without change throughout all generations.

My exhortation therefore is, that you beware of self-respects, of indifferency, of division, of delays, of discouragements, of imprudency, and of inconstancy ; and that you

give yourselves to sincerity, zeal, unity, diligence, magnanimity, prudence, and perseverance, that ye may be the choicest and blessed instruments of God for the establishing of the kingdom of his Son, our Saviour, in the land.

The last use is for consolation, which is not repugnant to true humiliation. I will not trouble you with the general doctrine of such benefits and comforts as we are made partakers of by the princely office of Christ: for it were long to shew how by the virtue of this his office he applieth unto us all that he hath done and suffered, that the kingdoms of the world may be our Lord's and his Christ's, and he reign over them for evermore; and communicates with all true believers this grace, to be kings with him, to reign over their own lusts, which is greater than any earthly conquest. He that ruleth his own spirit, is better than he that winneth a city; to reign over the world, which still lieth in wickedness, and to reign over Satan the prince of this world, and worker of all mischief. If we find nothing of this, we believe nothing of the kingdom of Christ: if we endeavour not the sense and experience of this communion, our faith is but imagination. But leaving these generals, I would upon this ground, give you some comfort for the cause and work in hand, and it is this, first, if it be the cause of Christ which we maintain; next, if we be the servants and people of God, seeking his honour, and endeavouring that his kingdom may come, why may we not be comforted in this, that Christ is our King, and will one way or other vanquish and subdue all our enemies? I will use but two reasons for it: one is, from the great and glorious victories that he hath in former times obtained over so mighty enemies for the comfort of his people; if we do but remember what great things he hath done since the beginning of this war, we should deny our own experience, if we doubt for afterward. The other is, when we consider what is said in the end of the prayer which he taught his disciples, "Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory." If we pray and endeavour that his kingdom may come, if we desire the

crown to be put on his head, and the sceptre in his hand, we may be confident of success. Because his is the kingdom, he is bound by right to fight for, to defend, and to deliver his own subjects that are fighting for his kingdom. His is the power in heaven and in earth, over angels, over devils, over armies of men, and over all creatures. And his is the glory; the honour of his own actions will return upon himself. The first, that he is our King, teacheth us, that by office he ought to save us. The second, that he is able to do it, because power is his. And the third, that he will do it, because it will be dishonour to his name, to suffer his cause and people to perish, and it will be his glory to save them, and that not only in this world, but when we go hence. The penitent malefactor on the cross, cried out, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom:" we may rather with greater confidence say, Lord, remember us, when now after victory over Satan, the world, and death, thou dost possess thy kingdom. The time permitteth not to proceed to the other two branches of the text, and therefore here I cease.

LIFE
OF
JAMES GUTHRIE.
BY THE EDITOR.

L I F E

OF

JAMES GUTHRIE.

THE memorials of many of the distinguished ministers of the Scottish Church, at the period into which we are about to enter, belong rather to history than biography. Their individuality is lost in those great events into which they merged their personal existence, so that the narrative of the man is but the history of an important public controversy, or a series of national achievements. Such is mainly the biography of personages like Henderson, Gillespie, and Baillie, and such also must be that of their distinguished cotemporary, whom we would now introduce to our readers. The Life of Guthrie is rather to be found in the controversy between the Resolutioners and Protesters, the troubles of the Commonwealth, and the intrigues and persecutions of the Restoration, than from an array of personal facts and distinctive anecdotes. He is an important integral part of the history of the Kirk of Scotland, from the signing of the National Covenant in 1638, to the commencement of the persecution under Charles II. in 1661. All that can be done in this case, is to gather together the few

events of his personal history which have survived to the present day, and to arrange and connect them, so as to give some portraiture, however indistinct, of the individual man.

The birthplace of James Guthrie, and the time at which he was born, are equally unknown. He was of an ancient and honourable family, being the son of the Laird of Guthrie, in Angussshire. After having studied at the grammar school, and entered the University, it is probable that his views were directed toward the ministry according to the episcopal fashion, and that his aspirations were regaled with the prospect of a mitre. Such was the case with several, at this period, in Scotland, who afterwards became the strongest antagonists of Episcopacy. After having completed the usual course of education, he regented in the University of St Andrews, and there taught as Professor of Philosophy with considerable reputation. According to the report of the day, his Episcopal predilections had almost been confirmed by an attachment he had formed for a daughter of the Archbishop. But in consequence of conversations which he held with Rutherford and other eminent Presbyterians at St Andrews, and attendance upon their weekly prayer-meetings, he renounced his Episcopal tenets, and all his visions of aggrandisement, and cast in his lot with that poor and persecuted church for which he was afterwards to become a martyr.

Little is known of Guthrie's personal history, while he continued in his professorship at St Andrews. He was there the companion of those who afterwards acted so conspicuous a part in the subsequent trials of the church—and imagination can easily conceive how frequent and how solemn their intercourse must have

become, while the shadows of coming evils were gathering and deepening around them. Among others of these university acquaintances, Sharp, at that time a young man of ardent profession and high promise, was conspicuous. Yet, notwithstanding this fair exterior, it would appear, that Guthrie regarded him with a shudder, as one destined for a terrible career, and a more fearful termination. It is added also, that he frequently quoted this homely but prophetic distich,

“ If thou, Sharp, die the common death of men,
I'll burn my bill, and throw away my pen.”

But it would appear, that Guthrie was not alone in these gloomy premonitions respecting that unhappy man. Others, destined at a later period to become his dupes or his victims, had marked the future primate with ominous misgivings, although they were unable to assign the cause of them, as well as reluctant to give them utterance. May it not be, that for this very reason, these men were only the more ready to put trust in him afterwards, as an atonement for their unaccountable surmising?

After having regented the usual time, Mr Guthrie, in 1638, was inducted into the pastoral charge of Lauder. This was a momentous period. It was the year in which the celebrated Assembly was convened at Glasgow, and where such bold measures were passed, as made an appeal to arms inevitable. The nation was therefore summoned to rise as one man, and attest their steadfastness to the death in behalf of their beloved Church, by subscribing the Covenant; and all, except those who were malignant or faint-hearted, responded to the call. Every highway and path that converged upon the capital, was crowded with com-

missioners of presbyteries, and private individuals, while within the city walls, the great place of concourse was the church of Greyfriars. That building, like a mighty heart, concentrated the life-blood and vibrated the pulses that poured warmth and energy through the vigorous frame of Scotland. The lately appointed minister of Lauder was not remiss on this important occasion. When he had reached the capital, and was entering by the West Port, the first person he met was the city executioner in official costume. Guthrie started at the sight of this grim functionary, and as he mused upon the subject, he could not help feeling, that this encounter had a strange connection with the object on which he was bound. But onward he still fared to the church-yard of the Greyfriars, and in the presence of the assembled thousands subscribed his name. When he had thus pledged himself to Heaven, he said to his brethren, who were standing around him, "I know that I shall die for what I have done this day, but I cannot die in a better cause."

After this, we hear little of Guthrie for several years, during which time the events of the civil war absorbed the attention of the public. It would appear, however, that he had been actively employed in the interests of the Church, and had attracted the confidence of its most distinguished champions. A proof of the estimation in which he was held, may be recognised in the fact, that he was commissioned by the General Assembly in 1646 to repair, with Henderson, Douglas, and Cant, to Charles I. at Newcastle, upon the delicate mission of discussing with the king the question of prelacy, and obviating his objections against Presbyterianism and the Covenants. An epis-

tolary controversy ensued between his Majesty and the commissioners, the chief brunt of which, as our readers know, was borne by Henderson ; but as usually happens with such controversies, it produced no agreement. In the same year that the unfortunate monarch was beheaded (1649), Guthrie was translated from Lauder, to the more public and important charge of Stirling, in which he remained till his death.

After Charles II. had been recalled to Scotland, and when the unfortunate contest between the Resolutioners and Protesters ensued, Guthrie espoused the principles of the latter, and advocated them with such energy, that he was soon recognised as the leader of the party. Such too was the importance which he attached to the cause, that in conjunction with his colleague, David Bennet, he preached against, and denounced from the pulpit the Laodicean policy of the Resolutioners, and their readiness to coalesce with malignants and scoffers for the defence of the king and covenant. This attack was so unpalatable both to the courtiers and the Resolutionist Presbyterians, that they united in denouncing the unsparing divines, and Guthrie and Bennet were forthwith cited to appear before the king at Perth, on the twenty-second of February 1651, to answer for their offence. They accordingly repaired to the appointed place ; but instead of answering as enjoined, they gave in a declination of the king's authority in ecclesiastical matters, their alleged offence having been committed in a sermon. For this vindication of their sacred rights as churchmen, they were warded, the one in Perth, and the other in Dundee. So far, however, were they from being daunted by this foretaste of persecution, that only six days after, they presented another pro-

testation against the royal interference in things purely spiritual, expressed in still firmer language than before. This second document we give entire, notwithstanding its length, because it not only embodies the sentiments of our illustrious reformers on the connection between the civil and ecclesiastical authority, but also, because it formed the chief ground of accusation against Guthrie ten years afterwards, and for which he was brought to the scaffold.

“Whereas the King’s majesty and your Lordships have been pleased, upon a narrative relating to our doctrine and ministerial duties, to desire and require us to repair to this place, against a certain day contained in your letter, to-wit, the 19th of February; in answer whereunto, we excused ourselves that we could not so precisely come hither, because of bodily indisposition of the one of us, known to be of verity; promising withal to wait on his Majesty and your Lordships, as soon as the Lord shall remove the necessity of our delay; and in case of the not removal thereof, the other should come towards the end of that week, with the mind of both: and we accordingly appearing before your Lordships, did show how willing we were to hear what was to be said unto us, and to answer thereunto, as is contained in our protestation and declaration formerly given into your Lordships thereanent. Yet nevertheless, in the interval of time betwixt his Majesty’s and your Lordships’ receipt and reading of our humble excuse, and appearance before your Lordships, it hath pleased his Majesty and the Committee of Estates, not only to require us to come again to this place, which upon the first letter we have been careful to do with all possible diligence, but also, to ordain, that we should stay

here, or at Dundee, till his Majesty's return from Aberdeen, that in a full meeting of the committee, such course might be taken, as might be found most conducing for the safety of that place where we serve in the ministry ; as his Majesty and your Lordships' second letter of the date February 20. 1651 bears. Which letter, albeit it came not to our hands before the time of our appearing before your Lordships, and was then delivered and communicated to us, yet in relation thereunto, we have likewise offered to your Lordships assurance, that we should return hither against his Majesty's coming back from Aberdeen, until which time, his Majesty and your Lordships' letter did continue and delay the business, as also was declared by your Lordships at our appearance before you ; notwithstanding whereof, your Lordships have not been pleased to accept of any such assurance, nor to allow us your liberty to repair to our charges, till that time. And albeit this seems strange to us, especially in a matter of our ministerial function, and yet in dependence between the church judicatories and us undecided, nevertheless, that we even should not so much as seem in any wise to irritate, yea, that offence be not in any wise taken by any, especially by the civil magistrate, do resolve, for preventing of mistakes, and testifying our respect to civil authority, to endeavour to satisfy such an appointment, so far as we can without prejudice to our conscience, and the liberties of our ministry, and the solemn bonds and obligations that lie upon us to preach the gospel in the stations where God sets us, adhering always to our former declaration and protestation.

“ Likeas we do now protest, that we do not hereby acknowledge his Majesty and your Lordships to be

competent judges to presbyterial acts and letters, or our ministerial function, or preaching, or any part thereof, which are the subject-matter of your Lordships' letter, requisition, and ordinance, because that they are ecclesiastical, and belong to ecclesiastical assemblies, as the only proper judges thereof; and because neither the Presbytery of Stirling, who are the proper authors of the foresaid letter, which is the first ground of the foresaid requisition and ordinance, nor have we been convened therefore before any ecclesiastic judicatory, neither were ever convened, or convinced for breach of any ecclesiastical act in the premises; and so there has proceeded no antecedent sentence of the said judicatories, finding, that we have violated any act of the church in preaching against the present way of levy, or that we have ill or unwarrantably appealed from the commission of the General Assembly their desire and charge to us in that particular.

“And also we humbly protest, that there be reserved to us all remedy competent of the law against the injury we suffer, by being thus convened and confined by a civil judicatory, and having your liberty refused to us to return to our charges, notwithstanding of assurance offered to attend at the time to which our business is continued, seeing this procedure is contrary not only to divine law, the word of God, the covenant, and solemn engagements unto the acts of our church, but also to the acts of parliament and laws of this kingdom, and established rights, privileges, and liberties of the judicatories of the kirk.

“And upon supposal that his Majesty and your Lordships were competent judges of these things, which we do not acknowledge, but protest against,

for the reasons contained in this and our former protestation, and for many other reasons of that kind, yet the hearing of parties before judgment passed upon them being a part of that native liberty that is due to all men who do not by their wilful absence from, and contempt of the judicatory, forfeit the same, as being founded on the light of nature, common equity and reason, and agreeable to the word of God, and laws of all nations ; and the king's majesty and your Lordships having, in your first letter to us, propounded that method of proceeding with us : notwithstanding thereof, and our undertaking to compare in competent time, his Majesty and your Lordships have, without hearing us, passed such a judgment in reference to us ; therefore, we also protest against such method of procedure, as being contrary to that liberty which is due to us, and which we may justly challenge as subjects, and which his Majesty and your Lordships are bound by the light of nature, law of God, the covenant, and laws of the land to maintain and preserve inviolable.

“ And albeit we do not resolve, upon any consideration, to depart from this place, or from Dundee, where his Majesty and your Lordships have commanded us to stay till his Majesty's return from Aberdeen, but for preventing of mistakes, and testifying our respects to civil authority, to endeavour, as we have already declared, to satisfy such an appointment so far as we can without prejudice to our consciences, the liberty of our ministry, and the solemn bonds and obligations upon us to preach the gospel in the stations wherein God hath set us ; yet do we protest, that our staying here, or at Dundee, may not be esteemed or interpreted an acknowledgment of the

ordinance in reference to our stay, but that notwithstanding thereof, it is still free for us to make use of all these privileges and liberties which are due to us as ministers of Jesus Christ, in as free a way in time coming, as we might have done before our compearing before your Lordships, or having any such ordinance intimate to us.

“ JAMES GUTHRIE.

“ DAVID BENNET.

“ Perth, Feb. 28. 1651.”

Guthrie having thus vindicated the rights of the church against the usurpations of secular authority, was soon after summoned to defend them against the unconstitutional attempts of his own brethren. The Resolutioners, who now possessed the ascendancy in numbers and political influence, resolved to pass their favourite scheme of enlisting malignants and profane persons lying under church-censure, and to accomplish this, they endeavoured to pack a meeting at which the opposition of the Protesters should be of no avail. They therefore summoned an Assembly to be held in July at St Andrews, from which place it was afterwards transferred to Dundee; while they also announced, that such members as should be dissatisfied with the resolutions of the meeting, would be subject to ecclesiastical censure. This was a most unworthy imitation of the intimidating plans of James I. and Spottiswood, during the sorest struggles and worst sufferings of the church. The faithful, however, were not to be so silenced, and a keen discussion ensued at the meeting, in which Guthrie, Patrick Gillespie, and James Simpson, protested against the lawfulness of such an assembly wherein all liberty of judgment was

denied them. The other party retaliated, by formally deposing the three dissentients from their sacred office ; but the latter, acting in the spirit of their protest, still continued to preach, and discharge their ministerial duties, as if no such sentence had been uttered.

But this was not the whole amount of painful duties which the emergencies of the time inflicted upon Mr Guthrie, for an event had previously occurred, in which his firmness and uncompromising principles were tried to the uttermost. Charles, ever since his arrival into Scotland, besides subscribing the Covenant, had been sedulously employed in duping the ministers of both parties, with oaths, protestations, and promises, that cost him little effort. But it was not so easy for him to maintain that decorous conduct which such professions implied ; on the contrary, the levity of his demeanour, and his libertine actions, were perpetually bringing him in collision with the clergy, whose duty it was to denounce such an open scandal. Becoming impatient of these restraints, he, in concert with his giddy companions, devised a scheme for deliverance that was worthy of their united wisdoms. This was nothing less than to gather the broken fragments of loyalty together,—Papists, Episcopalians, and men of every shade of belief, or no belief,—and with these, not only to give law to Scotland and her Church, but to beat back the victorious Cromwell, and perchance recover England. This plan, most likely of post-prandial devising, was actually attempted to be put in execution. Under pretence of hunting, Charles, with a small retinue, left the Covenanters, crossed the Tay, and hurried forward to Angus, where he expected to find his general, the

Earl of Middleton, at the head of a powerful army. But the Earl, in spite of all his efforts, had been unable to accomplish his magnificent promises, for instead of an army, he had only a rabble-rout that vanished at the approach of a force under Leslie. Charles therefore was fain to return to the Committee of Estates, and resume his old arts of cajolery, while, with the proverbial ingratitude of his race, he left his late supporters to their fate. As by this insurrection a blow had been struck both at the church and constitution, the ringleader was amenable to punishment; and however the civil part of it might be remitted, the ecclesiastical penalty could not be so easily set aside. A Commission of the Assembly accordingly convened for the trial of Middleton, where Guthrie proposed that the sentence of summary excommunication should be passed upon the Earl; which measure was carried by a plurality of votes, and Guthrie himself was commissioned to pronounce the sentence, in his own church at Stirling, on the following Sabbath. But here the ecclesiastical was ated to come into collision with the civil power; for the Committee of Estates, unwilling to proceed to extremities with the king's favourite, absolved the culprit, and expected that the church would follow their example. The course of action which Guthrie adopted on this occasion was worthy of the self-denying reformers of the early period. Let rulers and civil powers determine as they might, he would discharge the duty which his divine Master through the church, had committed to his care. The Sabbath morning came, and as if to complicate his difficulties, a messenger arrived with a missive from a nobleman high in office, or as others assert, from the

king himself, intimating the resolution of the Committee of Estates, and requiring that the minister should pass from the sentence. Guthrie, who at this arrival had put on his gown and entered the hall, briefly replied, without opening the letter, "You may come to church and hear sermon, and after sermon you shall get your answer." The last bell having rung out, his affectionate wife thus addressed him, while his foot was on the threshold, "My heart, what the Lord gives you light and clearness to do, that do, without giving a positive answer to the messenger." He repaired to the church, and after sermon he pronounced the solemn sentence in all its forms, as if no interposition had occurred; upon which, the disappointed messenger mounted his horse, and carried the unwelcome tidings to his employer.

After the fatal rout of Dunbar, Cromwell, when he had arrived at Glasgow, invited several of the Scottish ministers to discuss with his army chaplains, in his presence, the comparative merits of Presbyterianism and Independency. It is probable, that in a contest by which men's minds are fully opened, the sagacious general hoped to ascertain the characters of those who directed the feelings of the nation, and discover how much they might be inclined to further his political purposes, and coincide in his religious tenets. The Scottish ministers complied with the invitation; and Guthrie, who acted as their chief spokesman, advocated the cause of his church so ably, that they were proud of their coadjutor. Cromwell soon saw, that however they might submit to force and necessity, there was no likelihood that they would willingly tolerate either republican or sectarian principles; and as for Guthrie himself, the general characterised him

as a "short man that would not bow." This unbending adherent of loyalty in the state, and order in the church, was also equally earnest in watching over the principles of such of his friends as were in danger of being seduced into undue compliances with the enemy, during that period of trial; and of these we may especially mention Lord Waristoun, Sir William Bruce of Stenhouse, Patrick Gillespie, and his own nephew William Guthrie of Fenwick, to whom he had been preceptor at college. The latter was so moved with the exhortations of his uncle, that he burst into tears, while he answered, "Sir, I take your freedom in very good part, for I have always looked on you as my father."

During the period that followed, when the subjugation of Scotland was accomplished under General Monk, and the Protectorate established over the three kingdoms, Guthrie pursued his duties as a minister at Stirling. These, however, were any thing but peaceful, as he carried into private life the same stout adherence to principle by which he had compromised his safety in public. This was eminently a period of religious and political excitement; and in the town of Stirling the rage of party-feeling was so keen, that the worthy minister was equally obnoxious to the royalists of the cavalier leaven,—to the Resolutioners, or men of political expediency among the Presbyterians,—and to the sectaries of the army, who frequently carried the pulpits by storm, and propounded their wild theories under the protection of the English army. And amidst the Babel din of so many vociferous watch-words, one derisive name predominated,—the name of Sicker-foot,* which was applied

* Sure-foot.

to the worthy minister, as a taunt upon the steadfastness of his course. But it was not to taunts alone that they confined their hostility. On the death of the pious and brave-hearted David Bennet in 1656, Guthrie was left without a colleague, and the Resolutioners proposed Mr Rule in his room, a candidate to whom Guthrie was opposed. In consequence of this opposition to the prevailing party, the mob rose against him on Sabbath, as he was repairing to church, and pelted him with stones and mud. A popular tradition, maintained to the present day, is, that the butchers of the town, who were foremost in the wild halloo, actually hounded their dogs upon the good man to tear him to pieces. As it was, he was struck down, and would probably have been murdered on the spot, had he not managed to escape into a friend's house. On another occasion, and also upon a Sabbath, he was attacked on his way to church, and with almost equal violence, so that he was obliged to return, and preach in his own house. After he had concluded the service, and dismissed his small congregation, he said to his wife, "Give me my dinner, for I hope, for all that I have met with this day, that my Master has accepted me, and is well pleased with me."

With regard to the English sectaries, the boldness and novelty of their sentiments, and their enthusiastic style of preaching, combined in many instances with exemplary strictness of life, had often such a powerful effect on the multitude, that the simple and unwary were apt to be led astray into their errors. On this account, although the task was attended with danger, Guthrie opposed their tenets, and endeavoured to counteract their influence in his parish. So great

indeed was his disapprobation of these novelties, that we are told he would scarcely consent to unite in marriage those who held them, or to baptize their children. On one occasion, James Cowie, his trusty servant, precentor, and amanuensis, had stolen out in the evening to hear one of their preachers. On returning home, his master was urgent to know where he had been, and the truant, after some delay, made a reluctant confession. "James," said the minister, with a displeased countenance, "go not to Gilgal nor to Bethaven: whatever these men be, they have nothing to do here."

We have already seen the boldness with which Guthrie confronted Cromwell when merely a successful general, in behalf of Presbyterianism and the king's authority; but he was equally uncompromising, when the same person was invested with more than regal power. Oliver was naturally anxious to settle the religious dissensions in Scotland, and in 1657, delegates, among whom was Guthrie, were sent from the two parties, to London, to state their respective principles and claims. The leanings of Cromwell were so decidedly in favour of the Protesters, that with but a moderate portion of that compliant spirit which had distinguished their adversaries, they might have obtained all they wanted: but they would not flatter his Excellency, or abandon those principles of constitutional government to which they had subscribed in the Covenant; and the "short man who would not bow," defended the king's right in the pulpit, in the presence of Cromwell's dreaded officers, and maintained it in public disputation with Hugh Peters, the Protector's chaplain. As there was some likelihood that he might be invited to preach before

his Excellency, Guthrie had carefully studied a sermon, the matter of which may be guessed from the text, which was Psalm xciv. 20, " Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law ?" But the invitation to preach was not given, and thus the minister lost his labour, and the Protector an admonition.

About a year before the Restoration, while Guthrie was preaching in a church at a communion service, he suddenly burst forth into prophetic intimations of a terrible storm that was soon to burst upon the kirk of Scotland—a storm, he said, that would blow several present into eternity, and that too in a most violent manner. The minister of the church and the auditory trembled at this woe-denouncing intimation. The prospect of wrath, however, became more certain still even to human calculation, when upon the death of Cromwell, and the abdication of his son, all eyes were turned towards the Hague, where Charles resided. When the king was recalled, and had landed in England, Guthrie said to one of his brethren, " This is a terrible and most fearful time, for some men's heads will not stand long on their shoulders." He then, in anticipation of his own share of the danger, turned to his wife, and said, " Whether desire you the castle of Stirling or that of Edinburgh to be my prison ?" On her answering that she desired none of them, he assured her, that notwithstanding her wishes to the contrary, either of these two places would be his prison, and that very soon. But although he had every thing to apprehend from the king's return, he cordially agreed in the measure. He also testified his loyalty in the fashion of the times, by setting a large bonfire before his door, observing to

his family, "We should render to all their dues; custom to whom custom, tribute to whom tribute, honour to whom honour."

A distinct feature in the character of Guthrie during his public career, was the anticipation of martyrdom. This prospect, which there is every reason to believe was first inspired by the ominous appearance of the executioner at the West Port of Edinburgh, seems to have deepened in intensity, as the period drew nigher for its accomplishment, until at last it settled into an eager longing, which even to himself appeared excessive and culpable. He one day gave a proof of this self-condemnation, while conversing with some of his brethren. They were talking about their predominant sins, and he confessed to them, that a too eager desire to suffer a violent death for a good cause was his. The reasoning that suggested itself to his mind, in favour of such a choice, was this: "If it were truly lawful for me to choose my own death, I would choose a violent death for a good cause; for then I retain my reason, the use of it, and the use of all my senses to the very last moment of my life. But in a natural death, we differ very little from the beast; for so long as we lose the exercise of our reason, so long we do not see, nor hear, nor speak." His friends of course dissented from his opinion, and preferred a tranquil deathbed.

An event soon occurred by which Guthrie was to test the soundness of his theory. A supineness—an infatuation almost incredible in such cautious far-seeing men, pervaded the ministers of Scotland at this time, so that notwithstanding their former experience of Charles, they believed that his reign would be a very millennium for the kirk; while they put their faith in Sharp, who

continued to dupe them to the last, even when he had matured his plot for their overthrow. But Guthrie, and a few faithful watchmen, were not thus to be deceived. They already suspected their agent, they had no certainty of the king, and something behoved to be done instantly to extricate the church from its dangerous position. But unfortunately there was neither assembly, commission, nor synod sufficiently near for a public and general effort ; and as the peril was urgent, Guthrie, with nine other ministers and two ruling elders, assembled in a private house in Edinburgh, upon the 23d of August (1660), to consider the evil and provide for the remedy. It was in truth a small number, a feeble minority, more like a meeting for conspiracy than the representation of a national church ; but the fault was not theirs, for they had repeatedly solicited the co-operation of the ministers of Edinburgh, who churlishly or timidly refused to attend. Their proceedings were perfectly constitutional and orderly, for they prepared the draught of a humble address and supplication to the king, which they purposed to submit to a larger meeting, before it should be sent to court. The language of this petition, besides being sufficiently respectful, breathed a spirit of most devoted loyalty, and the general purport of it may be learned from the following extract : “ We your Majesty’s most humble subjects do, with bowed knees and bended affections, humbly supplicate your Majesty, that you would employ your royal power unto the preservation of the reformed religion in the Church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government ; and the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government ; and

unto the carrying on of the work of uniformity in religion in the churches of God in the three kingdoms, in one confession of faith, form of church-government, directory for worship, and catechising; and to the extirpation of popery, prelacy, superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness: and that all places of power and trust under your Majesty, may be filled with such as have taken the covenant, and are of approved integrity and known affection to the cause of God. If in a matter that so much concerns the honour of God, and the good of this church, and your Majesty's honour and happiness, we be jealous with a godly jealousy, we know your Majesty's wisdom and piety to be such as will easily pardon it." Such was the tenor of this petition. Its demand was not extravagant, when we recollect, that Presbyterianism was not in England that stunted thing into which it afterwards dwindled; neither was this language disloyal in men who had seen with their own eyes the whole fabric of Episcopacy dashed to the ground, and a king buried among its ruins. Besides, his Majesty had himself taken the Covenant once and again, and had bound it upon his soul by the most solemn attestations—a fact of which the petitioners respectfully reminded him. But the whole proceedings appeared foul treason to the Committee of Estates at present entrusted with the government of Scotland, whose officers entered the meeting, seized the papers, and committed all the members to prison, except one who escaped. "The castle of Stirling or that of Edinburgh?"—the question was roughly decided now, for Guthrie was carried to the latter, while the petition itself was proclaimed a libel, containing "many par-

ticulars reflecting upon his sacred Majesty, the government of our neighbour church and kingdom of England, and constitution of this present Committee—and many other things directly tending to seditions, raising of new tumults, and, if possible, rekindling a civil war amongst his Majesty's good subjects."

In the mean time, the prisoners protested their innocence, and longed for a public trial; but this the Committee of Estates would not grant: in fact, these worthless rulers had now commenced their dark career of persecution with the imprisonment of the ministers, and were anxious to coerce those whom they were unable to convict. After remaining in the castle of Edinburgh nearly a month, Guthrie was transferred to the castle of Stirling; and about the same time, his pamphlet, entitled the "Causes of God's Wrath," was condemned by proclamation, along with Rutherford's *Lex Rex*. After having been imprisoned eight months, he was brought to trial before the Scottish parliament, on February 20, 1661. The charges against him were, his being the author and presenter of the Western Remonstrance—his writing the pamphlet of The Causes of God's Wrath—his authorship of the petition of last year, for which he had been imprisoned—his convocating of the king's lieges, to disturb the peace and subvert the order of church and state—and the declinature of the king's authority which he had given in at Perth in 1651. In this manner were huddled together several offences, most of which had occurred many years before, and been passed over without question or punishment; but the real offence, which was not once adverted to in the trial, was the excommunication he had pronounced against the Earl of Middleton, who was now at the

head of Scottish affairs, and eager for revenge. The already devoted victim eloquently and boldly repelled the charge of treason ; and his judges, many of whom had truckled to Cromwell, and only found their loyalty when it was safe and profitable to display it, might well have blushed, had they been accessible to shame, at the following declaration in the opening of his speech :—

“ My Lord, albeit it does become me to adore God in the holiness and wisdom of his dispensations, yet I can hardly refrain from expressing some grief of spirit, that my house and family should not only be so many months together cessed by a number of English soldiers, and myself kept from the pulpit, for preaching and speaking against the tender, and incorporating this nation in one commonwealth with England ; and that I should, thereafter, in the time of Oliver Cromwell’s usurping the government to himself under the name of Protector, being delated by some, and challenged by sundry of his counsel in this nation, for a paper published by me, wherein he was declared to be a usurper, and his government to be usurpation—that I should have been threatened to have been sent to the court, for writing a paper against Oliver Cromwell’s usurping the crown of these kingdoms ; that I should have been threatened with banishment, for concurring in offering a large testimony against the evil of the times, to Richard Cromwell’s council, immediately after his usurping the government. I say, my Lord, it grieves me, that notwithstanding of all those things, I should now stand indicted before your Lordships, as intending the eradicating and subverting of the ancient civil government of this nation, and being subservient to that usurper in his designs. The

God of heaven knows that I am free of this charge; and I do defy all the world, allowing me justice and fair proceeding, which I hope your Lordships will, to make out the same against me."

He then proceeded to answer the charges separately, in order. He denied the authorship of the Remonstrance, justified the contents of the pamphlet entitled, *The Causes of God's Wrath*, and showed, that even though the authorship should be traced to him, he had written nothing worthy of condemnation. He also acknowledged his authorship of the petition of the previous year, and maintained, that both meeting and memorial were strictly within the bounds of law and order. As for the last and heaviest of the charges—his declining the king's authority, when summoned ten years before to answer for his doctrine—he justified his proceeding in the following words:—

"I acknowledge, I did decline the civil magistrate as a competent judge of ministers' doctrine in the first instance. His authority in all things civil I do with all my heart acknowledge, and that according to the Confession of Faith in this church; and that the conservation and purgation of religion belongs to him, as civil magistrate; and that ecclesiastical persons are not exempted from obedience to civil authority and the commands thereof, nor from punishment in case of their transgression. But that the declining of the civil magistrate's being judge of ministers' doctrine in the first instance, may appear not treason and sedition, but lawful and warrantable, I do humbly offer:

"1. That such declinatures are agreeable to the rule of God's word, and to the Confession of Faith, and doctrine of this church, confirmed and ratified in Parliament by many several acts, and therefore have the

strength both of divine and human laws. That they are agreeable to God's word, is evident from this, that the Scriptures do clearly hold forth that Christ hath a visible kingdom, which he exercises in or over his visible members by his spiritual officers, which is wholly distinct from the civil power and government of the world, and not depending upon, or subordinate to, those governments and the acts thereof, (John xviii. 36, 37, Matt. xvi. 19, John xx. 23). That they are agreeable to the Confession of Faith, and doctrine of this church, is evident, because those do acknowledge no head over the visible church of Christ but himself, nor any judgment or power in or over his church but that which he hath committed to the spiritual office-bearers thereof under himself. And therefore it hath been the ordinary practice of this kirk in such cases, to use such declinatures, since the reformation from Popery, as may appear from many clear, undeniable, and approven instances extant in the acts of the General Assembly and records of this church; particularly those of Mr David Black, 1596, which were owned and subscribed by three or four hundred ministers, besides sundry others which are well known. And I believe, my Lord, this is not only the doctrine of the Church of Scotland, but of many sound Protestant divines, who give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's.

“ 2. Such declinatures are agreeable to, and founded upon the National Covenant, and solemn League and Covenant, by which the king's Majesty himself, and all the subjects of this kingdom, are bound to maintain the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this church, with solemn vows and public oaths of

God ; which hath always, in all kingdoms, states, and republics, been accounted more sacred and binding, than any municipal law or statute whatsoever, and being posterior to the act of parliament 1584, do necessarily include a repealing of it. — Upon these grounds it is, that I gave in, and do assert that declinature, for vindicating the crown, dignity, and royal prerogative of Jesus Christ, who is King of kings and Lord of lords; but with all due respect to his Majesty, his greatness and authority.”

After quoting those acts of parliament which fully recognised the paramount authority of the church in spiritual matters, and its exclusive possession of the power of the keys, Guthrie thus proceeded :

“ It is to be observed further, that it hath been lawful and in continual practice, that his Majesty’s Secret Council hath been declined in sundry causes, and the cause drawn to the ordinary and competent judge ; as matters civil to the Lords of Session, matters criminal to the Chief Justice, matters of divorce to the Commissaries ; yea, the meanest regality in the country hath power to decline the supreme judicatory. — As to what is alleged in the close of the indictment of protesting for remeid of law against his Majesty, the protestation was but an appendix and consequent of the other, made only in reference thereunto ; and a protestation against any particular act for remedy according to his Majesty’s law, cannot be treason against his Majesty, there being no act of parliament declaring it to be so ; and it being not authority in itself that is protested against, but only a particular act of the authority, against which protestations in many cases are ordinary. Lastly, it is to be observed, that this declinature was buried in

silence by his Majesty, and Committee of Estates, after the in-giving thereof, and Mr Guthrie sent home without ever challenging him for the same, and permitted to exercise his ministry in Stirling."

These weighty and conclusive arguments and eloquent appeals, would have been sufficient with any ordinary tribunal; but on this occasion, he spoke before deaf adders, who were proof to the voice of the charmer. The members of this miserable conclave were the wretched tools of Middleton, and the Earl had signified, that the man who had so daringly presumed to inflict upon him the righteous censures of the church, must not be suffered to live. With judgesso disposed, all pleading however just, and heroic, and eloquent, would have been but as the whistling of the wind through the cold eaves of the building in which they were assembled. When he was ordered to remove, he requested that time might be given him to consult with his legal assistants, and he was allowed till the 29th, that he might give in his final defence. He accordingly met with his lawyers—men cunning in the knowledge of statutes, and all the mysteries of legal fence,—but they were astounded at his superior knowledge of the laws of Scotland, and the promptitude with which he suggested those statutes and precedents which otherwise they would have forgot. "If it had been in the reasoning part," said Sir John Nisbet, himself a strong legal authority, "or in consequences from Scripture and divinity, I would have wondered the less he had given us some help; but even in the matter of our own profession, our statutes, and acts of parliament, he pointed several things which had escaped us." On the appointed day he gave in his defences, and the consideration of

them occupied the time till the 11th of April. Those who are captivated by the exhibition of mere intellectual energy and indomitable will, can find in the situation of Guthrie, at this crisis, a noble picture to contemplate. It was the spectacle of a man worn out with age and disease, and halting upon a staff, confronting regal and senatorial power ; falling indeed upon the field, but falling a conqueror. His life—we have seen that he cared not for that—but he cared for those high and holy privileges with which it was connected, and which it would have been more than death to him to forego.

The conclusion of Guthrie's speech at the final trial on the 11th, after the whole subject had been discussed, and his arguments, as well as those of his assistants had been propounded in vain, is extremely touching. " My Lord," he said, addressing the Earl of Glencairn, who was Chancellor,—“ knowing that it is wondered at by not a few of the members of this parliament, that I should stand to my own justification in those things whereof I am challenged, and that this is looked upon as a piece of peremptory and wilful humour, which, if I pleased, I might easily lay aside—my Lord, I humbly beg so much charity of all that hear me, as to think, that I have not so far left the exercise of all conscience towards God, and of all reason towards myself, and my dearest relations in the world, as upon deliberation to hazard, if not cast away both my life and soul at once. God knows, it is not my humour, but conscience that sticks with me ; and could I lay it aside, and not sin against God and dissemble with men, by professing or confessing what I think not, I should not stand in the defence of one of those things for the minute of an hour. But,

my Lord, having with prayer and supplications to the God of truth, searched the word of God, and consulted the judgment and practice of the reformed churches, especially our own since the reformation from Popery, and the writings of many sound and orthodox divines; and having frequently conversed with the godly ministry and praying people of this nation, and tried the pulse of their spirits; and the National Covenant, and Solemn League and Covenant, the particulars contained in them, and the superstructures that have been builded upon them; and anent sin, and duty, and the power of the civil magistrate in things ecclesiastical,—I find my practice and profession anent these agreeable to all those, and therefore cannot reckon my light for humour and delusion, but must hold it fast, till better guides be given me to follow.

“My Lord, in the last place, I shall humbly beg, that having brought so pregnant and clear evidence from the word of God, so much divine reason and human laws, and so much of the common practice of kirk and kingdom in my own defence; and being already cast out of my ministry, out from my dwelling and maintenance, myself and family put to live on the charity of others, having now suffered eight months imprisonment, your Lordship would put no further burden upon me. I shall conclude with the words of the prophet Jeremiah, ‘Behold, I am in your hands, saith he, do to me what seemeth good to you: I know for certain, that the Lord hath commanded me to speak all those things, and that if you put me to death you shall bring innocent blood on yourselves and upon the inhabitants of this city.’

“My Lord, my conscience I cannot submit; but

this old crazy body and mortal flesh I do submit, to do with it whatsoever you will, whether by death, or banishment, or imprisonment, or any thing else. Only, I beseech you to ponder well what profit there is in my blood. It is not the extinguishing me or many others, that will extinguish the covenant and work of reformation since the year 1638. My blood, bondage, or banishment, will contribute more for the propagation of those things, than my life or liberty could do, though I should live many years. I wish to my lord commissioner's Grace, and to all your Lordships, the spirit of judgment, wisdom, and understanding, and the fear of the Lord, that you may judge righteous judgment, in which you may have glory, the king honour and happiness, and yourselves peace in the day of your accounts."

Those hearts would have been more or less than human, that could listen unmoved to such an appeal ; and accordingly there was a stir of sympathy among his judges. Several noblemen left the house, declaring they would have nothing to do with the blood of that righteous man, and some of them even persuaded their friends to follow their example. But this secession only insured a more perfect unanimity in the unjust proceedings that followed. When his sentence was to be deliberated, Guthrie was removed from the hall, and thrust into the lobby, among macers, soldiers, and other underlings ; yet there, although surrounded by oaths and ribald conversation, his countenance was bright with holy triumph, as if he already saw the heavens opened. In the mean time, the question of his punishment which was under discussion was soon brought to a close ; for all were unanimous for death except the Earl of Tweeddale, who objected, that

banishment had hitherto been the severest censure laid upon preachers for their opinions. But nothing short of death would satisfy his merciless judges. They had tampered with their victim, and even offered him a bishopric, if he would consent to retract what he had written, and accede to the introduction of episcopacy; but having made full proof of his unyielding firmness, they substituted the martyr's crown for the mitre. On being called in, his sentence was pronounced, which was, that he should be hanged at the cross of Edinburgh; his estate to be confiscated, and his arms torn, and his head set up on the Nether Bow. He received it meekly, and with this Christian reply, "My lords, let never this sentence affect you more than it does me, and let never my blood be required of the king's family."

The day of his execution was not announced till the 28th of May, when it was decreed by the parliament to take place on the first of June. While in prison, many of his friends resorted to him, and it was evident to them all, that he was more engrossed with the coming troubles of the church, than with the prospect of his own personal sufferings. On one occasion, the minister of Neilston, with whom he was previously unacquainted, was introduced to him, under the character of an honest west-country minister. "He is welcome," said Guthrie in reply, "I know there are many honest west-country ministers; but the day is coming when it will be crime enough to be a west-country man." On another occasion, a student having procured access to the prisoner for a few moments, the latter said, among other conversation, "There is a dark cloud coming on, and the Lord is about to sweep this land with the besom of destruction. But,

Jacob, be not discouraged from following your books : you may live to see the cloud over, and may be afterwards useful."

The illustrious Marquis of Argyle, who was executed five days before him, visited Guthrie on his way to the scaffold, to bid him farewell. In former days there had been dissension between them, owing to that nobleman's compliances with the Protector ; but now, they were both standing on the edge of that fearful bourne, where every feud is left behind. They cordially joined hands and embraced, as those who were soon to meet again, and Guthrie fervently exclaimed, " My lord, God has been with you, and God will be with your lordship ; and such is my love to you, that were I not under a sentence, I would die this day for your lordship." So little did he envy the distinction between his own ignominious sentence, and the decapitation of his noble predecessor, that in a previous conversation with his wife, he had rather made it a subject of triumph. " Argyle," he said, " is to be beheaded, but I am to be hanged on a tree as Christ was."

On the night before his execution, Guthrie, with the aid of his faithful amanuensis, James Cowie, addressed several letters to ministers and private individuals ; and when he had subscribed and folded them, he stamped them with his family seal in the usual manner, and then across, so that the armorial bearings were undistinguishable on the wax. On being asked the cause of this strange proceeding, he replied, " I have now nothing more to do with coats of arms." When the hour of supper arrived, he partook heartily of that meal, and calling for cheese, from which he had hitherto abstained on account of his disease, he

observed, with a cheerful countenance, "The doctors may allow me a little cheese this night, for I think, there is no fear of the gravel now."

After sleeping soundly till four o'clock in the morning, he rose, and spent a considerable time in private devotion, in which he was overheard praying with great fervour. As his last hour approached, his wife said to him, "Now, my heart, your time is drawing nigh, and I must take my last farewell of you." "Aye, you must," he tenderly answered, "for henceforth I know no man after the flesh." Another of those fond ties that hold the heart to the world had also to be loosed, for he had a son named William, about four or five years old—so young indeed, and therefore so ignorant of the dismal tragedy that was approaching, that James Cowie could scarcely detain him from playing in the streets on the day of his father's execution. Guthrie, whose soul yearned over his boy so soon to become an orphan, took him upon his knee, and gave him such advices as were suited to his capacity. He bade him to become serious—to become religious—and to be sure to devote himself to that honest and holy course in which his father had walked to the death. "Willie," he said, "they will tell you, and cast up to you that your father was hanged; but think not shame of it, for it is upon a good cause."

The vindictive rage of Guthrie's persecutors pursued him to the last. As if his life had not been enough, they resolved that he should go to the scaffold bareheaded, and with his hands tied behind his back—and thus, it is said, that but for very shame or fear, they would have treated the Marquis of Argyle also. Against this gratuitous indignity Guthrie

earnestly protested, declaring that he was not a thief to be thus shamefully exhibited. He added, that if they pinioned his arms, they must also carry him to execution, as he could not walk without his staff, having the gout in one of his feet. They then made such a compromise in his favour, as could have suggested itself only to very small and vulgar minds; for while they would not abate the addition of the cord, it was tied so loosely, that he had full use of his arms and his staff. The scaffold was erected at the cross, and the death-procession repaired thither from the Tolbooth, escorted by a guard. When he ascended the fatal platform, and had prayed for a few minutes, he went two or three steps up the ladder, but no higher, fearing giddiness in his head, and then made his dying address to the spectators; after which, he gave a copy of it sealed and subscribed, to his friends, to be kept for his son William, until he had become older.* It was spoken with such an air of alacrity and elevation, that it seemed to those who looked on, as if he had already been half in heaven. On going farther up the ladder, he ejaculated the words of the prophet, "Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine holy One? I shall not die but live." And just before he was turned off, he raised the napkin from his face, and cried, "The covenants, the covenants shall yet be Scotland's reviving!"

After the sentence of death had been executed with all its revolting accompaniments, the headless trunk of the martyr was put into a coffin, and carried to the Old Kirk aisle, to be prepared for burial; and there, several pious ladies of quality carefully dressed and

* This speech the reader will find in Naphtali, and Wodrow's History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland. M

laid it out. During their performance of this kind office, they were observed to dip their napkins in the blood that flowed from the corpse, and for this they were challenged by Sir Archibald Primrose, the Register, who likened the act to the superstition of the Papists in perserving the relics of saints. They repelled this unjust aspersion, by declaring, that they did not mean to worship these bloody memorials, but only to hold them up to heaven, in the sight of Him who is the avenger of righteous blood unjustly shed. While they were thus employed in their affectionate task, a young gentleman entered the building, passed up the aisle towards the corpse, and opening a vial filled with rich perfume, he poured the contents upon the body, so that the whole building was soon pervaded with a delightful odour ; after which, he bowed respectfully to the company, and retired as silently as he came. “ God bless you, sir,” exclaimed one of the ladies, “ for this labour of love which you have shown to the slain body of a servant of Jesus Christ.”

In the mean time the head was set up on the Nether Bow Port, as a spectacle for the finger of scorn to point at. But among those who repaired thither, and looked up at the long grey hair rustling in the wind, and the features embrowning and drying in the sun, one little boy was often seen gazing fixedly upon that countenance with looks of love and terror,—and still returning day after day, and hour after hour, as if there was for him a language in that silent head which none else could hear. And who could that child be, but Guthrie’s young son, the little “ Willie” of the martyr’s last affectionate counsels and cares ? His love of playing in the streets was over now ; a new occupation had absorbed him ; and as he re-

turned from these pilgrimages, we may conceive with what feelings his mother heard him, when on her anxious inquiry as to where he had been, his usual reply was, "I have been seeing my father's head!" The dying admonitions of the departed parent enforced by such a solemnizing spectacle, seem to have sunk deep into William's heart; for it was observed, that after his father's death he spent much time in solitude, and was often employed in prayer. Resolving to walk in his father's step, he directed his studies to the church, and became a scholar of excellent promise; but he died in early youth, when he was entering upon trials to be licensed as a preacher.

Another event that occurred connected with the martyr's head is so startling to the philosophy of the nineteenth century, that were it not an incident as well attested as any event in his individual history, we might scruple to mention it. And we state it as a fact, the truth of which was acknowledged both by friend and enemy throughout Scotland, and as merely one of the many instances how strangely blood will speak, and conviction pursue the murderer. Several weeks after the execution, while the Earl of Middleton was passing in his coach up from the Canongate to the High Street, and was entering in at the Nether Bow, several drops of fresh blood from the dried head fell upon the carriage, in the presence of many awe-struck spectators. Every attempt was made to erase these accusing blots; but by no process could they be removed, and the Earl who consulted several physicians as to whether the prodigy might be solved by natural causes, could get no satisfactory reply. **As** the stains obstinately retained their place in spite of washing and scraping, Middleton was obliged to

get a new carriage. For twenty-seven years that head continued to moulder in the winds, and the bony eye-holes to stare upon deeds of public violence and persecution that followed almost without a pause, when at last it strangely disappeared, while no one seemingly could tell what daring hand had removed it. The honour of that feat has been ascribed by Howie to Mr Alexander Hamilton, at that time a student in the University of Edinburgh, and who afterwards was minister for twelve years in Guthrie's pastoral charge at Stirling.

We have been thus minute in our account of the martyr's trial and death, because his execution forms an important epoch in the history of our church. He was the first who suffered for vindicating the supremacy of Christ over civil authority in the government of his spiritual kingdom—the first of an almost countless throng of victims who bravely followed his example, and whose blood still cries from behind the altar, “How long, O Lord, how long?” The injustice of the charges, and the illegality of his death, will have already been sufficiently apparent. Of this indeed Charles himself, notwithstanding his habitual indifference to right and wrong, appears to have been fully conscious; for on being told that Guthrie was executed, he asked with much eagerness, what they had done with Patrick Gillespie, at that time lying under a similar charge. When they told him that the latter had so many friends in the Scottish Parliament, that his life could not be taken, the king answered, “If I had known you would have spared Mr Gillespie; I would have spared Mr Guthrie.” He knew that the last was a man of unflinching loyalty, and not easily to be led into opposition against the royal

will, while the former was but a waverer, and little to be trusted. But such a regret was not likely to remain long with the crowned epicure, who reduced all to the standard of his own gratification, and who could say afterwards of Lauderdale, "He has done many bad things in Scotland, but nothing against my interests."

The whole private walk and demeanour of Guthrie corresponded with the events of his public life. Such was the perspicuity of his judgment, and his dialectic power, that he was frequently called by his friends a "master of reasoning," a title which he nobly vindicated, not only in familiar discussions, but also in the able defence which he made upon his trial. He had, moreover, such a command of temper, that he never suffered himself to be ruffled even in the most trying debates; and when any anger or impatience was manifested, he usually broke off with such words as these: "We must now give it over, for if we turn any way passionate, the true end of this present exercise is entirely lost." So consistent was his daily walk with God, that James Cowie declared, he got more good from his master's habitual conduct, than from all his sermons. Of Guthrie's Christian humility also, the same individual was known to give the following interesting account. The minister was wont in family devotion, to pray for one present, as woefully ignorant, unworthy, and prone to evil, and this in language so lowly and abasing, that the poor precentor thought himself to be described, and that his master had a worse opinion of him than the real state of matters could justify. One day, therefore, he respectfully desired to know what he had done, so deeply to offend him—and was astonished, after an explanation, to

find, that Guthrie had applied these terms to his own case and character, and not to those of the humble servitor. At one time when he was so heavily stricken with disease, that death was anticipated, he caused James Cowie to read to him the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans ; and when the latter came to that passage, “ I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,” Guthrie bursting into tears exclaimed, “ I have nothing else to lippen* to.”

The natural temperament of this eminent sufferer appears to have been that of a cheerful person, who in less trying times, and with his amount of talent and scholarship, would have bequeathed not a few facetious sayings which posterity would gladly have cherished. But it was not until he had fought the good fight, and when the crown was within his reach, that his original tendency showed itself—and then, as we have seen, it was only in a few chastened glimpses, at a time when greater buoyancy would have been inconsistent and out of place. To look at his picture, as given in the original painting, the expression of his countenance is that of fixed melancholy, such as frequently distinguishes the features of persons who live amidst trying events, and whose resolution is habitually strung either to dare or suffer. During his life-long career, he had neither leisure nor mood for jesting ; and the events by which he was surrounded, and in which he was mainly an actor, would have made any heart sad. His friends one day were blaming him, at table, for his saturnine demeanour and mournful looks, when he replied, “ An it were not for one thing, I could be as hearty with you as any man.” They pressed him to know what this “ one thing” was, and

* Trust.

he told them, that it was the low condition to which he saw the work of God reduced in Scotland. Not a few of these afflictions by which his countenance was saddened, arose from the laxity or defection of his personal friends, who in many cases yielded, and left him to struggle alone. On one of these occasions, when the prospect of persecution for the truth was most menacing, Mr Rollock, the minister of Perth, a jocose man, said to him one day, “ We have a Scotch proverb, ‘ Jouk* that the wave may go o’er you’—will ye jouk a little, Mr Guthrie?” “ Mr Rollock,” replied the other gravely, “ there is no jouking in the cause of Christ.”

We have thus endeavoured, from scanty and broken materials, to present not a portraiture, but a few prominent features of a true Scottish hero—of one who endured the worst in behalf of the highest and holiest interests of his country. It is to be regretted that so little remains of such a distinguished character, either in the form of printed works or personal narrative. Most of his papers were upon the great controversy of the period between the Resolutioners and Protesters. We believe only one of his sermons has hitherto been printed, being his last preached at Stirling, entitled a “ Cry from the Dead,” and which was published in 1738. We humbly hope, that the two additional mites which we have cast into the treasury of the sanctuary, being two of his sermons hitherto unpublished, will be blessed by the Lord of the temple to the hearts of our readers, to whom we affectionately commit our labours. These discourses, which we have in this instance selected as specimens of

* Duck, stoop.

Guthrie's theological writings, have been transcribed from a manuscript volume written about the middle of the seventeenth century, in the possession of David Laing Esq., of the Writers to the Signet Library ; which volume was placed by him at the disposal of the Committee, in that frank and generous spirit with which he is always ready to devote his rich antiquarian treasures to the benefit of the public. We respectfully invite others to follow the example, and thus contribute to extend the rich old theology of our covenanting land.

SERMON

PREACHED AT AIRTH IN JULY 1658, PREPARATORY
TO THE COMMUNION.

“Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon : look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions’ dens, from the mountains of the leopards.”—SONG OF SOLOMON IV. 8.

WE think we need not stand to tell you who it is that speaks these words, nor to whom it is that they are spoken. Those that do know the words of the Song, do know, that all of it is a mutual conference between Christ and his church, a part of which is set down in these words, in which the Lord Jesus invites his church, whom he doth here call his spouse, that she would come with him from these places mentioned in the text. That which more needs explanation is—What it is that he means by inviting her to come from Lebanon, and to “look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions’ dens, from the mountains of the leopards.”

We shall not trouble you with niceties or euriesities whereof some expositors are full on these words : we take the plain meaning to be, that Lebanon, Amana, Shenir, and Hermon, were several mountains that carried these names, lying into the several airts and corners of the world from the land of Israel, where the church of God now inhabited. And if you will so take the latter part of the words that speaks of the lions’ dens and of the mountains of leopards, they are well accommodated with the former ; for in these mountains there were lions’ dens and leopards. Therefore

the plain meaning of the words is, that the Lord Jesus Christ calls his children from all corners and quarters of the world, to draw nigh to himself—that which is spoken by the prophet Isaiah, “Behold, these shall come from far; and lo, these from the north, and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim” (Isa. xlix. 12)—and by Jesus Christ, “Many shall come from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven,” (Matt. viii. 11, Luke xiii. 29).

This is the meaning, taking all in order, to the church in general. But in order to the calling of the particular members of the church it reaches yet further; and in that sense we would speak of it at this time. It reaches to hold forth and describe to the churches, or a soul’s native country and church, the natural qualification, inclination, and disposition of those dwelling among mountains, and among lions’ dens. Hence it is that the Lord Jesus Christ calls them to come home to himself. This may serve for understanding of the words: we come to divide them into these four branches:

1. The party that he invites under the name of his Spouse, to come unto him.

2. The places from which she is called—from Lebanon, Amana, Shenir, Hermon, the lions’ dens, and the mountains of the leopards.

3. The invitation itself—that she would come.

4. And lastly, Where away she is invited to come—“Come with me,” and it is repeated again and again; “Come with me, even with me.”

1. The first particular, is the party invited to come, here designated by the name of Spouse. We shall not stand to speak of it, because it is that which frequently occurs through the Song. This indeed is the first time that it occurs, for what reason we shall not determine: all we would say of these compellations is this—that they hold forth a conjugal relation or marriage bond betwixt the

Lord Jesus Christ and the souls of his people ; which is no small business, whether taking it in order to our comfort or duty. Our Lord's using it before obedience is given, seems to point at the Lord's dear and designating affection to his people. It carries with it on his part the real accomplishment of it ; though yet there be no marriage consummated, but only he hath propounded the suit, yet he designates her with that honourable title. It is not easy to reckon how many thoughts of affection, and love, and good will the Lord carries to souls that are within the compass of his decree, though they yet may not be actually fetched home. We believe that those whom he hath actually called, and who have given consent to this proposition to come with him, can give an account of many great and gracious things that he hath done to them, and for them, before ever they had any thoughts of coming to him ; that he hath done them many a real, gracious, and good turn. And we think, if on any account there lieth any obligation on souls, it lieth on this account—the many good turns and favours that Jesus Christ has done for them, before they had any thoughts of coming to him. And happily it would not be an unprofitable exercise at this time, to any whose hearts the Lord has been good unto, to consider how many mercies their life hath been attended with from their Lord's hand, since he brought them to the world.

2. The next thing, is the places from which he calls his spouse ; to come, from Lebanon, and look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, and the mountains of the leopards. On these, interpreters have both pleasant and profitable things ; but we would comprise all into this one plain point of doctrine:—

1. That the native country, condition, state, or carriage of those souls whom the Lord Jesus Christ betroths to himself, is not very desirable:—or thus, Those souls whom the Lord Jesus Christ betroths to himself, are, for natural condition, no desirable match.

We shall not go without the bounds of our text. Ye

will find this truth made out in 1 Tim. i. and Eph. ii. It is clear in Ezek. xvi. 3, "Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan: thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite; and as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born, thy naval was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee: thou wast not swaddled at all, nor salted at all; no eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person, polluted in thine own blood."

Look on the text: ye see, 1. The natural condition of souls to be a barren, fruitless condition; of such a condition are mountains, especially the tops of mountains. I say, all natural condition is a barren condition. Take Paul's testimony of it: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing," (Rom. vii. 18). Though you would search it thoroughly, you would find no good fruit there. Look to the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, verse 12, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." A fruit indeed we bring forth, but it is as good as no fruit. "Israel is an empty vine; he bringeth forth fruit unto himself," (Hos. x. 1). No fruit unto God, or for the soul; "Israel bringeth forth vanity, and the wind," (Hab. ii. 13; Isa. xli, 29); yea, worse than that; and so we come to another thing:

2. That as our natural condition is naturally fruitless, so it is base and vile. "Come," says he, "from the lions' dens, and from the mountains of the leopards;" these dwelling-places are very vile places. This holds forth our natural estate: "They are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one," (Psa. xiv. 3). And it is the condition of all of us by nature, whether Jew or Gentile, for thereby it is that Paul proves the necessity of being justified by faith, (Rom. iii.). Next, it holds forth the ignorance of our natural estate, from the darkness of the lions' dens. Also, from the natural character of the beasts, the brutishness of the children of men's understandings of the most im-

portant particulars. We should know that the natural man is ignorant of the holy nature of God, on these two main accounts, First, in regard of the spirituality of his worship: they know not that God must be worshipped "in spirit and in truth," (John iv. 24), therefore they think external worship complete. Next, in regard of the holy nature of God: they know not that he cannot look on iniquity, therefore it is said, "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself," (Psa. l. 21). The second thing that the natural man is ignorant of is, the spirituality of the law. Paul says, "I had not known sin but by the law," (Rom. vii. 7). The philosophers knew not the spirituality of the law. A third thing that the natural man is ignorant of, is the gospel, and the righteousness of God by faith; thence it is that they go about to establish their own righteousness, (Rom. x. 3). Next, they are ignorant of a good part of their duty. Something the light of nature teaches them, but there are many things that they never know, till God bring them to another estate; therefore, our condition is a condition of ignorance and stupidity.

3. Next, our natural condition is an untoward and stubborn condition. Such are the properties of lions and leopards; they are not easily tamed, they are not easily put into the yoke. We are as undaunted heifers, as bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."

4. Last of all, it is a fiery, cruel, and proud condition. Of such a condition are lions, by which there is no passing by the highway where these remain. So are all of us by nature; exceeding fierce, cruel, and proud, one to another, and oftentimes to ourselves. Thus ye see the shadow of a natural condition.

USE I. It seems to commend the grace of God manifested in the gospel. Set these things right against those things that he calls us to in the gospel, calling us spouse, and

calling us to match with himself; these things commend the grace of God. We shall name some few things that commend the grace of God manifested to that undesirable party:

1. That He stands in no need of us. "My goodness extendeth not unto thee," (Ps. xvi. 3). "I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goats out of thy folds; for every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains, and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine and the fulness thereof," (Psa. l. 9-12). "Can a man be profitable unto God? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous; or is it gain to him that thou makest thy ways perfect?" (Job xxii. 2, 3). "If thou be righteous, what givest thou him?" (Job xxxv. 7). When men have done all these things that are commanded them (says Christ, Luke xvii. 10), they are unprofitable servants; they have done that which was their duty to do. This one consideration in this match, doth highly amplify the grace of Jesus Christ the Lord.

2. Another thing that commends the grace of God is, that if he would have chosen a match to himself, he had more honourable parties to have matched withal. The angels were more honourable than those lying in the lions' dens. But verily, "He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham," (Heb. ii. 16). The apostle lays much weight upon it, though we lay little weight upon it.

3. Next, he took not those who in some sense had more need than we; who were fallen not only to the earth, but to hell. Is it a small matter that he passes by them, and chooses us? Surely they were better in their institution than we; and if they had been chosen again, they had been better than we.

4. But again, if he would have chosen a match to himself, might he not have chosen the strong and the mighty? My brethren, "ye see your calling; not many wise men after

the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called ; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty ; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence," (1 Cor. i. 26). The vilest calls he from the lions' dens. These things serve much for aggrandizing of the grace offered in the gospel.

USE II. It teaches us how to improve both the one and the other—our natural estate, and the grace offered in the gospel. "Wherefore, I abhor myself (says Job, xlii. 6), and repent in dust and ashes." We should all be humble. Have any of you reason to be proud of your birth and high places ? here is your pedigree—the lions' dens ; base and vile creatures, subject to many vile affections ; vile, fierce, cruel creatures, that will not submit to God your Maker, devouring one another day by day. Have we not reason to abhor ourselves, and walk humbly with our God ?

USE III. Next, it calls us to the admiration of this grace tendered to us in the gospel, through Jesus Christ the Lord. Wilt thou look about, and consider what a party thou art whom he chooses to match with ? Consider what a match he is, and what a match he might have had ; and yet he choosed thee, even when thou wert cast out upon the open field, to the loathing of thy person. Consider these things, and see if thou hast not cause to wonder at free grace.

USE IV. Next, it calls us to give subjection to, and improve this free grace offered unto us in the gospel ; therefore we come to the next point : it is—the gracious call and invitation that Christ gives to souls to come with him in the word. "Come ye," is a word frequently used in this Song. The observation is, that there is a gracious, tender, affectionate invitation, holden out by Christ to poor sinners in the gospel, wherein he offers no less than himself, to partake of his own lot : "Come with me, even with me."

There is a twofold call in the word : one, external, in the outward ministry and dispensation of the gospel, which he speaks of, when he says, "Many are called, but few are chosen," (Matt. xxii. 14). By the external call, in the mouth of the Lord's ministers by whom this gospel is preached, we beseech you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God, (2 Cor. v. 20). And there is an internal call, consisting in the ministration of the power and arm of the Lord on the hearts of his people, bringing them home to himself, spoken of, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts," (Psalm lxxv. 4). "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," (John vi. 44). This internal call, is that mainly meant in the text ; therefore in the first language it runs thus, Thou shalt come with me : be the opposition of thy heart what it will, thou shalt come with me.

There are some properties of this call that we would name ; and First, It is a very serious and real call : "Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled, for my head is filled with the dew, and my locks with the drops of the night," (Cant. v. 2). "Behold, I stand at the door and knock : if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with me," (Rev. iii. 20). "My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away ; for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth ; the time of the singing of the birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell : arise, my love, my fair one, and come away," (Cant. ii. 10-13). And Revelations xviii. 4, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." The Lord Jesus, when he calls on the souls of any that are given him of the Father, he doth it in a most serious real way ; therefore he presses his suit till

he prevail and obtain: he stands at the door and knocks, and waits on, till his head be filled with the dew of the night; he pursues his business in a cordial way: if it were not so, all of us would have a cold coal to blow at. Who of us all whom the Lord Jesus has brought under the banner of his love, would have come there, if there had been no seriousness on his part?

2. Next, as it is a serious, so it is a compassionate and kindly call: "Come with me, even with me, my spouse." The scripture speaks much of the bowels of his heart moved with compassion towards his people. His bowels moved with compassion when he saw the multitudes scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd, (Matt. ix. 36). And Ezekiel xvi. 8, "When I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness, yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine." There is much compassion there!

3. Next, the scripture holds it out to be a heavenly call. Such a word is in the third chapter to the Hebrews, verse 1, "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling"—It is heavenly, not only because it comes down from God out of heaven, and reveals to the soul heavenly things; but because it makes the soul partake of the divine nature, and never gives it rest, till it make the soul fly above to dwell with God.

4. Next, it is a holy calling: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling"—not only because dispensed in a holy way, but because it makes us partakers of holiness, and of all things that pertain to life and godliness. We are all called unto holiness: "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation."

5. Next, the scripture says this of it, that it is a uniform call. We know not the word in scripture, but ye will find the thing in Ephesians iv. 4, "There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." The hope of it is uniform in all that are called therewith: the

meanest are to have the thing ; the poorest are called to as great things, as the greatest king on earth.

6. Next, this is attributed to it, and it is indeed a great one, that it is the calling that Christ never repents. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance," (Rom. xi. 29). He has put mercy as the clause of the covenant, that binds up his hands that he will never repent ; "Mercy is built up for ever," (Psa. lxxxix. 2).

7. Lastly, it is a very powerful efficacious call, therefore Paul (in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, when praying for soul light to them), joins this in verse nineteenth, "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward, who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." This is that arm of the Lord that is revealed on the hearts of all those whom the Lord fetches home to himself, and whom he brings home over the head of all opposition. Now, a little we would say of use.

USE 1. Ye may take it in that word of the 26th of the Acts, verse 19, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly call." Is there such a call tendered to us from the Lord Jesus Christ ? then, we beseech you, do not disobey nor resist. There are several sorts of disobeying and resisting of the call of God in scripture. We shall name some.

1. One is that which we may call wilful disobedience—so the scripture terms it. "He sent forth his servants, to call them that were bidden to the wedding, and they would not come," (Matt. xxii. 3). And Luke xix. 14, "We will not have this man to reign over us." There is a strong unwillingness in the heart of every natural man, yea, even of many under this precious gospel, that the business sticks directly at their wills. They are convinced the gospel is good, and if they will not believe, they will perish ; yet, believe they will not. Surely we may know this from our own spirits, that our disobedience sticks directly at our will. The matter is not so much the world, and their idols,

which to many are a snare, but the direct contradiction to the call of the gospel, and on this account, the disobedience of their will. When he has broken the back of his will, it is well.

2. The next sort of disobedience is not so high. It is called an excuse, not directly disobedience (Luke xiv. 18): "The first said, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." I mean, that disobedience that is in the souls of those who are tethered and snared with their lusts, and the world. They have no such direct contradiction with their heart, but with their lusts; they are snared and fettered, that they delay from day to day.

3. There is a third sort yet worse. We may say, there are many who not only excuse themselves being ensnared, but they are so far from giving obedience to the gospel, that they spit in Christ's face, and mock the call in the mouth of the Lord's messengers, through the inward serpentine hatred reigning in their souls against Christ and the gospel.

4. These three take up the greatest part of the world; but disobedience to the call of God reaches yet further, and doth fall on, or befall many of those that do belong to God, and that both before and after their conversion. There are not many who have been converted, but who before their conversion may tell something of that—that they have resisted the Holy Ghost, slighted Christ's call, and grieved his spirit.

We would sum up all this, with some arguments to one and all to give obedience to God's call. We cannot speak to every sort; but since it is a duty on us all, we shall speak to some few things we should do, if we would obey this invitation and call of Christ. For argument, take one from the 12th Chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, versé 25: "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh; for if

they escaped not, who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." See that ye slight not his invitations, for why? dreadful indignation was on them that disobeyed Moses' law, that disobeyed him that spake on earth; how much more dreadful is it to refuse Christ speaking from heaven!

2. A second argument to persuade you to give obedience to this call, is in Psalm xlv. 10, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house, so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty." If thou wilt give obedience to his call, it shall exceedingly engage the affection of his soul to thee; then shall the king greatly desire thy beauty. Oh, how much it shall engage Him, if thou wilt obey his heavenly call! thou shalt "ravish his heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck"—as it is in the next verse of the text.

3. Another argument is in Canticles vi. 10, 11, 12, "Who is he that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners? I went down into the garden of nuts, to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded: or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib." While she is giving obedience to follow to the garden, she had this her soul formerly dead and benumbed, come to be as the chariots of Amminadib, quick and lively in the ways of the Lord. This advantage thou shalt have, if thou wilt come with him from Lebanon and the lions' dens. Strength shall be put into thy soul, whereby to run the way of his commandments.

4. A fourth argument is, Tell me in all the world where you will find such an offer? and tell me what will you do, if you embrace not this offer? Therefore choose you. We set before you life and death. If you obey the call of the gospel, your soul shall live (Isa. liii. 3); but "if ye will not

believe that I am he, ye shall perish, and die in your sins," (John viii. 24).

The next thing is, What must we do, if we would be obedient to this heavenly call? We must come from Lebanon, and look from the top of Amana, and Shenir, and Hermon, and from the lions' dens; or,

1. In the Psalmist's words, that we would hearken, O sons and daughters, and forget our own people, and our father's house. There must be a forsaking of your former life; and say, with Ephraim, "What have I to do any more with idols?" (Hos. xiv. 8); these must be cast to the moles and to the bats, (Isa. ii. 20). Ye must defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold; thou must cast them away as a menstruous cloth, and must say unto it, Get thee hence! Ye must be denied to your sinful lusts, and forsake your father's house, so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty. "On man cannot serve two masters" (Matt. vi. 24), much less, one woman be wife to two husbands; therefore, come with him from Lebanon.

2. Next, you must engage yourself unto him; resolve to be for him, and not for another, so he will be for you. There must be a thorough resigning of yourself to him, no more to be your own, but his: "they gave their own selves to the Lord," (2 Cor. viii. 5). This is one great part of the mystery of godliness, to give our own selves to God; that is the same that you call personally covenanting the soul, and all it can make, to be wholly his.

3. A third thing is in Num. xiv. 24. Caleb had another spirit within him, and followed the Lord fully. It is to walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing (Col. i. 10), a thing far out of request even with many whom the Lord has done good to—the serious giving of the soul wholly to please him.

4. One thing more, if ye would be obedient to this heavenly call that God lays much weight on, is, the holding up in your soul, throughout your days, and the tenor of your

life, a holy estimation of the grace of the covenant, and the low base condition of yourselves. "Unto you therefore he is precious, which believe," (1 Pet. ii. 7). "That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee, for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord," (Ezek. xvi. 36). And, "Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious," (1 Pet. ii. 7). And, "Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you; be ashamed and confounded for your own ways (Ezek. xxxvi. 32); but for my holy name's sake," (ver. 22). If any of these abate, presently obedience to the call of the gospel will abate.

Now, we would speak somewhat of the person with whom we are invited to come. The text lays much weight on it, "Come with me, even with me." It is not without cause doubled. What have ye to say of it? If ye would search all the book of God, if ye would search heaven and earth, ye will not find such a ME again. We thought to have spoken to this: Come with crucified and slain me. If there be any generosity in our hearts, sure I am, that what he has done will move us to give obedience to this heavenly invitation. He has done much for us, and will we refuse to come with him? If so, we shall be most abominably ungrateful. Next, as Come with me, who have no form nor beauty; that is the former consideration; so, Come with me, who have all form and beauty. He is "altogether lovely," (Cant. v. 16): in all the world ye will not find a match for him: it is a matchless beauty, that your hearts should rather fall a-wondering at, than expect we should say any thing of it. Then, Come with rich me. Ye know that word, "the unsearchable riches of Christ." There is abundance of most precious things in him, of all things necessary for eternal life, all things that appertain to life and godliness. And what more? Come with strong and powerful me. He it is on whom strength is laid; "I have laid help upon one who is mighty," (Ps. lxxxix. 19, and 17).

And, Come with honourable and glorious me,—and many things of that kind.

We would sum up this point in one word of doctrine,—that the Lord Jesus Christ is content to allow every soul that will match with him, no worse lot than himself. Come with me, thou shalt fare no worse than I fare; my lot shall be thy lot; as my Father hath appointed a kingdom unto me, so I appoint a kingdom unto you, (Luke xxii. 29). “Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God,” (John xx. 17). “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also,” (John xiv. 3). Ye should know that Christ is very serious in his business: he not only spoke it to his disciples, but he made it a special part of his prayer, in John xvii. 24, “Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.” It is true, through all eternity he shall be the chief of ten thousands, but they shall have as much as is suitable to the spouse, who partakes of the honour and dignity of the husband. If so, may not this persuade us to hearken to Christ’s voice, and to come with him, even with him, from Lebanon, and to look from the top of Shenir and Hermon, and from the lions’ dens, and the mountains of the leopards? This is, that he calls you to give obedience to-day and to-morrow.

We thought to have spoken to some scruples that may rest in the bosoms of many, but we shall only say two words, and close.

Some may say, they would fain come, but they cannot. We doubt not but that may be the ease of many in the world, that they would come, but they cannot; the bonds of their souls are oftentimes strong on them when they would come. When the Lord calls, “Be lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in,” the doors are fast bolted; that all they can do, is to look through the lattice, and desire him to come. If that be thy case, it is a

hopeful business, not only on this account, that ye are called to look from the top of Amana, and to look from your prison-houses, which, as ye heard, to look is to believe and come with him,—but also, it is hopeful on this account, that his soul's affection, and the power of his arm, are both engaged to loose thy bonds. His soul's affection is engaged to it. Pities he not every soul oppressed by the devil? Surely, if he be touched with any part of our infirmities, he is touched with that part. His arm is engaged to it. It is the commission he is engaged in to the Father, "To proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; that he may say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves." "To bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house," (Is. xlix. 6, and xlii. 7). Therefore wait on him, and be not afraid but thou shalt be accepted in thy willing mind.

But some may say, they would fain come, but they do not know if they shall be accepted, yea or no. Truly, it is a strange business, yet it is often the pinch of a believer's soul, that they would come, but they doubt if they should be welcome. Two questions we would ask thee: Art thou willing to bid adieu to thy father's house, and thine own people; to bid adieu to thy idols, and to come with him from Lebanon, from the lions' dens, and the mountains of the leopards? If not, why shouldst thou complain, while thou flatterest him, and provokest him to answer thee according to the idol of thy heart? But if thou be willing, thou mayest be assured he will make thee welcome. If thou wilt forget thy father's house, he shall greatly desire thy beauty; and as a bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy Lord rejoice over thee, (Is. lxii. 5). And so we close.

SERMON

PREACHED UPON THE COMMUNION SABBATH.

“And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.”—LUKE XXII. 14.

THESE words do contain the Lord Jesus Christ his way of preparing himself, if we may so speak, and his disciples, unto the participation of that blessed ordinance which the Lord doth now call us to partake of.

It is not our purpose to spend time, nor to trouble you with the difficulties that are started upon the understanding of some circumstances that occur in the words, concerning which there are large debates and disputes to be found in those who write and comment thereon. But leaving these that we conceive not pertinent for the time, we shall take the words as they lie, and observe something from them.

And first, we have the circumstance of time—when it was that the Lord Jesus sat down to compose and address himself for this action. The text says, it was when his “hour was come.” You may take it in these several relations, 1. In reference to the hour and time decreed, and determined, and appointed of God: When that hour was come, then he sat down. 2. Next, in reference to the hour and time commanded and appointed in the law for celebrating of the Passover: When that hour was come, he sat down. 3. In reference to the time that himself had transacted and appointed with his disciples whom he sent before to the lodging, to prepare room for him: When that hour

was come, he sat down. 4. Last of all, in reference to the time of his sufferings: When he knew that hour to be at hand, he thought it fit to go about that solemn business. A word from each of these.

And from the First, observe, that as all times and seasons concerning all businesses, especially those that relate to the salvation of man, as they are all determined and appointed of God, so all these hours and times have their coming, and their fulfilling, and accomplishment. Thou may be persuaded that as there is nothing that belongeth to the business of thy salvation, but as it is well ordered in the counsel of God before all eternity, so it will also in its hours and seasons be accomplished and fulfilled. All that have any interest in that business of salvation, may stay their hearts on the confidence, and hope, and expectation of this. How unlikely soever some things may be to thy apprehension as to their accomplishment; happily thy perseverance to the end, happily thy overcoming of Satan, and sin, and death, and hell, thy rising out of the grave, thy enjoying the fulness of communion and fellowship with God in heaven; yet believe it, all those hours and times will come, and all those things which are promised shall be accomplished and fulfilled.

Next, Learn that the Lord Jesus Christ ordereth all his actions according to the rule and prescript of the law, and what is therein commanded for substance or circumstance he fully fulfilled. When his hour was come, then he sat down, as he says (Matt. iii. 15), "for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." This ye should observe for your consolation and example, that your souls may be stayed against the pleading of Satan, or of your own conscience, or the justice of God against you for your transgressions, if you have fled to Christ for refuge. Though you have been a transgressor in many things, be comforted in this, that our blessed Lord Jesus Christ hath fully fulfilled the law of God in your room. Therefore, look up to him in whom the Father is well pleased, for this also ye

should observe for your example in all things, to order your conversation for substance and circumstance according as it is commanded in the law of the Lord, and to receive Christ for your Saviour, your Lawgiver, and King.

Next, It tells us, that the Lord Jesus is a very exact observer of his trysts,* a strict keeper of his hours, and of external order in all these matters that concern the whole tenor of his life and carriage. We stand not on this, but we would make these uses of it: And 1. To you of this congregation, that ye would learn to keep your hours better than many of you use to do. It may be said of many of you, that when your hour is come, ye are not come: it was not so with our Lord. 2. Next, to all of you, whether of this or any other congregation, that ye would make it your care to have regard to all the circumstances of external order, for God is the God of order, and not of confusion.

Lastly, Mark that the Lord Jesus Christ would not leave one jot or tittle unperformed, that was incumbent on him for his sufferings; because he knew that they were at hand, therefore he maketh haste to be doing what was to be done. It is a wonder to consider how he is taken up in all things relating to the salvation of men, and the encouraging of his disciples. Ye should look on this with comfort, what a Lord you have; next, for your example, that ye should mind your own duty entirely, and that you should mind him more than yourselves.

The next circumstance of the text is, when his hour was come, he sat down—importing these two things: 1. His solid composing of himself for this great business that he is now going about. 2. To intimate the gesture and posture that he intendeth to follow that business in. So it holdeth out these two things to us:

1. That when we are about to meddle with divine ordinances, we ought in a sober, solid, grave way to compose ourselves thereunto: so doth our Lord Jesus Christ here. And

* Appointments, engagements.

we likewise observe David (2 Sam. vii. 18), he went in, and sat before the Lord; he composed himself to his business. And that ye would learn to avoid untenderness and rashness, instability, and lightness, and vanity, while as we are meddling with the ordinances of God: we beseech you, learn to compose yourselves in all the work of the Lord; compose your heart, compose your eyes. It is something sad, that scarce any can exempt themselves from wandering eyes and vaging hearts, while they are about God's ordinances. Oh for that tenderness that might make us afraid of one wandering thought, and for that tenderness that might make us afraid of one straying look! Are we not before the Lord whose business it is?

2. Next, learn from it, that there is not the least signification in all Christ's carriage at his last supper of kneeling, or that which is ordinarily called geniculation; but he intimates it to us over and over again in a sitting posture, such as was the ordinary table gesture of those times, in that place of the world. And, therefore, as there is just cause to throw that scandalous idol of ceremonies out of the church of these nations, so we have just cause, in our several stations, to pray that God would keep these islands, that they be not brought in again.

The Third circumstance in the text, is the persons with whom he sat down, that is, the twelve apostles. And you do very well know, that these twelve were not all of one sort, or we may say, they were not all one man's bairns. (John vi. 70), "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" And yet, the Lord Jesus Christ sits down with him, as well as the rest; yea, all of them, though they were not such as Judas, had many great weaknesses and infirmities, all of them had but very small knowledge of many divine mysteries. Christ says to Philip, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" (John xiv. 9). And all of them are contending for primacy and superiority over one another, all of them expecting and looking for Jesus Christ to reign as a

temporary king on earth. Yet notwithstanding of all these things, Christ sits down with them. We would note this, that hypocrites may be, and often are called to the participation of divine mysteries; they are brought to the external fellowship and society of the people of God. We will not here determine whether Judas was a communicant. He did no doubt eat the passover, as is acknowledged by all; he was of Jesus Christ's company and fellowship several years, and partakes with them in the communion and fellowship of church ordinances—which holds out, that hypocrites do partake of external privileges, and holds out, that he will have his church made up both of believers and hypocrites. Therefore all of us are called on this ground to look to ourselves. We may be present at the hearing of the word, and come to the table, and partake of the blessed sacrament, and yet, for all that be hypocrites, we may be Judases, such who have devils. We beseech you, look to it what length Judas went. He was a professor, an apostle who preached and did miracles in the name of Christ; yea, more, he was a professor of old standing, and yet the first who sold Jesus Christ the Lord—yea, an eminent professor of old standing, and followed him whithersoever he went of a long time—yea more, an eminent professor in suffering for Christ. He was engaged in many persecutions that Christ was subjected to—and yet, a devil! Therefore ye should take heed that Judas' worm be not at the root of your gourd, I mean, that the love of the world be not at the root of your heart. Oh! that is a distinguishing thing as to the reality and sincerity of many a man's profession.

The next thing it yields us is, that the Lord Jesus Christ alloweth very weak Christians to be fellow-communicants with him. The apostles, many of them, if not all of them, were very weak, and had right many great infirmities; weak in knowledge, weak in faith; so that Christ pleads long, ere he bring that length as to give profession of their faith, and to say they believe, that he says, "Do ye now believe?" (John xvi. 31). They had many carnal coun-

sels of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, yet he allows them to sit down with him. We do not speak of this to encourage any in their infirmities, but that some, though they be compassed about with many infirmities, and are not so strongly mortified as they would be, may not be so discouraged, as to think that Christ will not allow them to sit down at his table. Thou who desirest to come to Christ to be lightened of these things, thou mayest come, though thou hast infirmities.

We come to the following verse, wherein Christ, as it were, maketh a short sermon of preparation to them before the communion: "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you, before I suffer." We take the passover here, not simply as relating to that which is properly called the passover, but so as it comprehendeth that which he instituted instead thereof, I mean, the supper of his body and blood. And he gives the reason of his desire: "I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God,"—and, "I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come," (verses 16, 18). We shall not be able at this time to overtake these reasons, and, therefore, let us now return to the words of the 15th verse: "With desire I have desired,"—a most pathetic fervent expression! I have heartily desired with all my heart; my soul longs much "to eat this passover with you, before I suffer,"—the words are not easily expressed in our language.

You may mark two things from the verse. One is, that Jesus Christ is possessed and led forth with most vehement fervent desires after those things that concern the salvation and comfort of his poor people. Of this nature is that which he speaketh here in eating the passover, a business that concerned the salvation and comfort of his people to the end of the world; therefore, most vehemently with desire he desired it. And several such passages flow from him, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened (or pained) till it be accomplished?" (Luke xii.

50). "I have meat to eat that ye know not of," (John iv. 32). "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me" (John iv. 34), and to finish the work. And many other things there are. One is, his valiant and cheerful offering of himself to undertake the business with the Father: "Lo, I come; I delight to do thy will, O my God," (Psal. xl. 7). Another thing is, that he was never more offended with any body concerning any thing, than with those who would dissuade him from the business. Ye know what he said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men," (Matt. xvi. 23). Next, he is so far from declining any thing of that kind, that he most willingly offered himself thereto: "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair," (Isa. l. 6). I hid not my face from shame and spitting. And as he most willingly offered himself, so he did most patiently undergo, and endure, and suffer. "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth," (Isa. liii. 7). Lastly, Though all the world could not take his life from him, yet he laid it down of his own accord, to bring about the business: "No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again," (John x. 18).

The reasons why our Lord Jesus Christ is thus carried out with most vehement desires to those things that concern the salvation and comfort of his people, are these: 1. He is God, and that is enough; therefore it behoved him to have such desires. "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim; how shall I deliver thee, Israel; how shall I make thee as Admah, how shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together," (Hos. xi. 8, 9). How so?—"for I am God and not man." These are affections beseeming him who is God. 2. And as he is God, so also man: "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abra-

ham" (Heb. ii. 16), therefore "he is touched with the feeling of our infirmities," (Heb. iv. 15). 3. Which is the result of both, the unspeakable ineffable height, and breadth, and depth, and length of that love that possesseth his heart to his brethren; they are the objects of his love, therefore he vehemently desireth their salvation. 4. Last of all, pure pity. When he saw none in heaven or in earth to help, and wondered that there was no intercessor, therefore his arm brought salvation unto him, and his righteousness it sustained him; for he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak, (Isa. lix. 16, and lxiii. 5).

USE I. Now for application. It reproveth those whose desires are more vehemently carried forth toward something else than either their own salvation, or any body's else whatsoever. There are some whose desires are set on their lusts and their iniquities. So far art thou from conformity to Jesus Christ the Lord, that thou art in a real conformity with Satan; therefore, by the authority of the Son of God, we discharge thee from sitting down with Christ at his table. It reproveth a second sort, whose desires are more set on the world, than on their salvation. Ye live, as Solomon saith, like the horseleech; it crieth, "Give, give!" it has never enough, (Prov. xxx. 15). We say to thee also, till thou change thy way, thou art not entitled to any part or portion in this business. A next sort it reproveth, who have desires of revenge against those that have done them injury. Doth thy soul plead interest in Jesus Christ the Lord, and does thy desire run so cross to his? Beware: if you do not forgive, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you. And we know not on what consideration ye can come to the table of the Lord; and to stay away, you declare, that you are more tender of your own honour, than of the gracious offer of Jesus Christ the Lord. Therefore we obtest you in the name of Jesus Christ, to lay these humours aside. A next sort, though they be none of those, yet they have some idol

that their desires are carried out after—and would to God many of these nations were not carried forth this way ! We allow you desires of what is lawful, if ye moderate them, that they turn not to lusting, so that the Lord send leanness to your souls, (Psal. cvi. 15).

USE II. Holds out most sweet ground of consolation to all those that desire to be saved, and to be comforted in the Lord. Is it thy desire indeed to be saved ? then take this home to thy soul, that it is not so much thy desire, as it is the desire of Jesus Christ the Lord. Is it thy desire to be strengthened and comforted ? take this home to thee—it is not so much thy desire, as the desire of Jesus Christ the Lord. Thou mayest desire it, but he doth most vehemently desire it : thou mayest desire it, but with desire he doth desire it ; he doth most affectionately, seriously, and earnestly desire it, else why offered he himself to be a ransom for souls ? Why was he found in the fashion of a servant ; why gave he his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, but to persuade thy soul, that with desire he desires thy salvation, and that thou mayest be comforted ? Therefore do him no such injury and wrong, as to dispute the business, but give him glory by believing, and with joy draw water out of the well of salvation.

USE III. If this be the object of Christ's desires, it ought to be the object of thy desires also. Doubtless, his desires are rightly regulated, and set on right objects. Let it be thy desire that thy soul may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. It may be said, Who doth not desire that ? We grant that there is in all the children of men, even heathens, and Turks, and pagans, a desire to be saved ; but it is not that desire that is in Jesus Christ the Lord. Ye should take notice that there is a natural and a spiritual desire of salvation. Of all that ever lived, there were none of them ever so contrary to nature and self, as not to desire salvation ; but none have a spiritual desire of salvation, but those that are renewed in the spirit of their minds. How these two differ, take them in these particulars : 1. The

natural man is not so much led forth with desire of salvation, as his desire is led forth not to go to hell, and to be free from the wrath of God. He is afraid when he hears tell of hell, and would fain be free of that. As Pharaoh, he desires no Moses to pray that sin may be pardoned, or that he might be in favour with God, but that the plague might be stayed. 2. A second difference is, that if a natural man desire heaven, it is not the true heaven that he desireth, where the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost reign, and where the spirits of just men are made perfect; but it is a carnal heaven of his own framing, that may satisfy the flesh, as the heaven of Mahomet. But the spiritual man desireth fellowship and communion with the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and with the spirits of just men made perfect. 3. The natural man's desire of heaven leads him not on to abandon his lusts, but he desireth heaven and to avoid hell, and the enjoying of his lusts all at once; but the other bids adieu to all those lusts, and saith with Ephraim, "What have I any more to do with idols?" (Hosea xiv. 8). Lastly, The natural man's desire is but a bare desire, and goeth no farther, like the desire of the sluggard, that saith, "There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets" (Prov. xxvi. 13), and "turneth himself on his bed, as the door turneth upon its hinges." His "desire killeth him, for his hands refuse to labour," (Prov. xxi. 25). It leadeth him not on in the use of the means to obtain salvation; the other doth not so.

Another branch more of this Use in reference to the ordinance that the Lord calleth us to, is in reference to those words that are uttered by our Lord: "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." And should we not make our souls resound and re-echo this back again to him with desire? Lord, do our souls desire to keep this passover with thee? He left this with the word commanded to us, "This do in remembrance of me," and with the word of promise, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till

he come." Therefore, work up your hearts with desire, to desire to eat this passover with Jesus Christ.

Another observation is, that the nearer folks are to trials, and sufferings, and death, the more earnestly they should desire to partake of the blessed and precious mysteries of the gospel, or the more earnestly they should put forth themselves for the salvation and good of others. "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." I am now about to lay down my life for you, therefore with desire I desire to eat this passover with you before I suffer. Some instances of such a frame we shall name: 1. Moses, when he knew that he was about to die, and when he is called to go to mount Nebo to view the land, and to die there, what a deal of business and care is on him to put forth himself for the salvation and good of the church of God? The whole book of Deuteronomy is a clear evidence of it, especially the 30th, 31st, 32d, and 33d chapters of it, in appointing and instructing of Joshua, in exhorting of them, and in writing the law, and causing it to be kept and to be read to them. Another instance is in John the Baptist. When he was about to suffer, he sends his disciples to Jesus Christ out of prison, that they might be confirmed that he was the Messiah, (Matt. xi.). Also Paul, having called the elders of the church, saith to them, "I know that ye shall see my face no more; take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified," (Acts xix). And then, ye have the great example of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who poured forth his love most eminently in washing his disciples' feet, in appointing of his last supper, and in this last sermon and his last prayer. When folks are nighest unto suffering, then they should most mind those matters; and when they are nigh to the end of their race,

they have the more need to lay hold on the crown. Next, when they are nigh to the end of their race, they should leave some encouragement and strengthening to others living behind them. Next, the more nigh they are to trials and sufferings, they have the more need to summon their faith and patience, that they may be strengthened to hold out to the end.

We cannot bring arguments enough to beseech you how to improve this ordinance, because it is a time wherein we seem to be nigh trials and sufferings, and the Lord knows if we may not be near to death also, and our church may be near such too. Doth not iniquity prevail and abound exceedingly? And, oh, what iniquity this last week! We are not speaking against the public thanksgiving to God, and the expressing of your joy in a moderate way; but, oh, what drunkenness and swearing! and whether those of this place have not had their share of it! Would to God ye would timeously think on it. Next, is not the love of many grown cold? And would to God they were not grown malignants, and that many are not grown hot again, even of those that have the image of God. Lastly, there seemeth to be a conspiracy in these nations of the old malignant prelatial party of bringing us back again to the bondage and yoke of Prelacy, therefore we should take heed how we eat out this passover. We may say to you, as was said to Elijah, "Arise and eat, because thy journey is too great for thee," (1 Kings xix. 7). We know not how great the journey is that we have to go in the strength of this meat, or whether it may be the last that some of us may eat in this place.

A CRY FROM THE DEAD :

BEING MR GUTHRIE'S LAST SERMON, PREACHED AT
STIRLING, BEFORE HIS MARTYRDOM AT
EDINBURGH IN JUNE 1661.

PREFACE BY THE REV. EBENEZER ERSKINE.

PERHAPS it may be thought somewhat strange, how a sermon of that great and good man, Mr James Guthrie, once minister of Stirling, should come abroad about seventy-seven years after his death, he having been crowned with martyrdom in the year 1661. The occasion of its seeing the light is as follows :—January, this same year, I had occasion to be in company with my worthy and dear father and colleague, Mr Alexander Hamilton, in the Manse of Stirling, a few days before his departure to glory ; and having heard that the sermon was in his hand, I took occasion to inquire at him about it. He told me that it was not at present in his custody, having lent it out to a Christian friend about eighteen miles distance, but allowed me to send for it, adding, that he would be well pleased it were published. I asked him further, of the way he came by it ? To which he replied, that for what he knew, it had lain in the closet of the room, where he and I were sitting, since Mr Guthrie's incumbency, until one day he fell upon it, as he was turning over some old papers, which had lain there he knew not how long.

Some days after Mr Hamilton's death, I wrote for it, according to his direction, and had it sent to me accordingly. And that same authentic copy, written, as I was told, by Mr Guthrie's own hand, goes to the press. The only reason of its lying so long in obscurity beside me, is the throng of other work which necessarily devolved upon me in this place, after the loss of my brother colleague, still intending, when time allowed, to say something by way of preface. But the same strait continuing upon me, I am obliged, after all, through the importunate cries of many who have heard of it, to let it go with saying little or nothing. Only I regard it as a piece of honour put upon me in holy providence, not only to be the unworthy successor of that great man, but the publisher of the last sermon that ever he preached in the pulpit of Stirling, where it is my desire, the same testimony of Jesus, for which he suffered unto death, may be maintained unto the latest posterity.

What may be in the womb of this providence of the resurrection of Mr Guthrie's last sermon in Stirling after it has been so long buried with himself in the dust and rubbish, God only knows, and time must discover; only, considering the way of its resurrection and conveyance, it looks like *a cry from the dead* to the whole land; but in a particular manner, to the congregation of Stirling, upon whose watch-tower it was delivered.

I have thought the manner of the conveyance of this sermon to public view at this time of day, one of the curious links of the great chain of Divine Providence. The Rev. Mr Alex. Hamilton when he was but a youth at the College of Edinburgh, from a just regard he had to the memory of Mr Guthrie, and the cause in which he suffered, was excited, at the peril of his life, to take down with his own hand Mr Guthrie's head from the Netherbow Port of Edinburgh, where it had stood as a public spectacle for about twenty-seven or twenty-eight years. The very same person is ordered thirty-eight years thereafter to succeed him in the ministry, and uphold his testimony in the pulpit of Stirling

for the space of twelve years. And although a good many ministers, both of the Presbyterian and Episcopal persuasion, had possessed the Manse of Stirling* since the death of Mr Guthrie; yet none of them are directed to discover his farewell sermon in Stirling, until the same hand is employed, which was honoured to take down his head, and to give it a decent and honourable burial.

I make no doubt but the above remark will appear whimsical and contemptible, as well as the sermon itself, in the eyes of a generation of men in our day, who are wise in their own eyes; but whatever may be the sentiments of men, whose "minds the god of this world hath blinded;" yet the work of the Lord is honourable and glorious, and will "be sought out of all them that take pleasure therein. Whoso is wise, and observeth these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord." But how awful is the certification to those who shut their eyes and ears against the appearances of God in his providential dispensations! "Because they regard not the works of the Lord, nor the operations of his hand, he shall destroy them, and not build them up," (Psal. xxviii. 5).

As some have been longing and crying for the publication of this sermon, so I am apt to believe some others will wish, that it and the other papers of the worthy author which came along with it, had been buried in silence for ever. Neither needs this appear strange. His testimony when alive, tormented the men who then dwelt upon earth to that degree, as to stone this great Seer in Israel, and afterward to imbrue their hands in his blood. And, therefore, it cannot be very easy or pleasant to those who are treading in the same steps, by attempting the burial of that cause and work of reformation for which he suffered martyrdom, to hear his voice

* This fabric, noted for being the residence of so many great and good men, distinguished in the history of our National Church, has lately become ruinous, and is now taking down. Such is the instability of earthly things; "But the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance."—*Note in the Edition of 1824.*

crying from under the altar, or his dying testimony again staring them openly in the face.

I make no doubt to say, it was the testimony of Jesus for which this faithful martyr, Mr James Guthrie, suffered. What that testimony was, will partly east up from the following papers, all of them compiled by him when drawing nigh to eternity. The sermon was preached 19th August 1660, and he imprisoned the Thursday thereafter. His paper entitled, Considerations anent the Danger of Religion, and the Work of Reformation, &c. was published by himself that very same year. The third paper is his speech upon the scaffold the year following. By these and his other papers and contendings, contained in Mr Wodrow's History, he being dead, yet speaketh unto the living. And it will be easy for the judicious and serious reader, to discern who are in our day bearing up, and who are bearing down, and burying the cause for which he contended unto blood.

That the same Spirit of God, and of glory, which enabled the worthy author of the following papers to contend unto death, for the royal prerogatives of his great Master, the only Head, King, and Lawgiver of his Church, may, in the perusal of the following testimonies, enter into the soul of every reader, is the prayer and desire of him who is thine in the work of the gospel of Christ Jesus,

EBENEZER ERSKINE.

Stirling, 14th Aug. 1738.

SERMON.

“And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

“And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray; and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

“But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.”—MATT. XIV. 22-25.

It is of purpose, and choise, in reference to the condition and trial of these times, we have resolved, through the Lord's assistance, to speak somewhat of this piece of trial, and of the storm wherewith the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ were exercised at sea; and the rather we have chosen to speak somewhat of these words, because they were the choise of a very precious and worthy man, to speak of in a day of trial; I mean, of that eminent servant of God, John Knox, whom the Lord did help to be a most eminent instrument of the work of reformation in the Church. We shall not much stand on any particuler unfolding of the branches of the text, but take these as they lie in order. The thing we desire you first to look to, is, how the story that is recorded in these verses, is knit with these that go before, for we will find them knit together by many of the evangelists, viz., the story of the glorious miraeles wrought by Jesus Christ the Lord, in feeding so many thousands of people with a few loaves, and a few little fishes; after this, that sad trial which the disciples met with at sea. They are knit together by the evangelists Matthew, Mark, and John. After that the Lord Jesus Christ had preached to the people and his disciples, and had fed many thousands with a few loaves, and a few fishes, and had manifested much of his power and glory, “He constrains his disciples to get into a ship,

and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitude away." He sends his disciples to the sea, and the multitude away, that they should not for a season hear any more of his doctrine, and see any more of his miracles.

That we may lay a foundation for somewhat for your edification, First, It may be inquired, why it is that he sends away both his disciples and the multitude at that time, and would have an interruption of his doctrine and miracles, when he sends his disciples to the sea, and the multitude to their own homes? If we look to the other evangelists, we will find the causes there enough, (Mark vi. 52); the cause is given there, why he thus exercised his disciples, "for they considered not the miracle of the loaves, for their hearts were hardened." Albeit, the Lord Jesus Christ had revealed much of his power and glory in the miracle of the loaves, yet his disciples did not duly consider thereof. Therefore he would needs exercise them with a storm, and a tempest at sea, that they might both be taught in the knowledge of their own weakness, and also might be better schooled in the faith of his power and glory. The reason why "he sent the multitude away," is set down in the gospel written by John, vi. 26. When the multitude comes again, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." Compare it with that in the 15th verse, "When Jesus Christ therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone." He knew that for all that they had seen and heard of his word and miracles, they were of a very carnal disposition, and seeking to establish to themselves carnal prosperity and peace, therefore he sent them away for a time.

From the connection of these two histories, and from the scope of the whole, we offer you one point of doctrine; that the Lord Jesus Christ is oftentimes, and ordinarily pleased, after special manifestations of his power and glory in his church, and amongst his people, to exercise them with

special pieces of trial, and troubles, and storms. After his doing of great work for their comfort, he is ordinarily pleased, to raise great and dreadful storms and tempests, for their exercise and trial. So here, when he hath in a most comfortable, and kindly way, banqueted them, and revealed much of his power and love in so doing, he sends them a storm and tempest on the back of it, and will have an interruption of his doctrine and miracles for a time, wherein they are all like to be drowned.

1st Instance. There are many instances in the word, of the Lord's dealing thus. Look in the books of Moses, what follows on the back of that glorious deliverance, that the Lord gave to the people of Israel out of Egypt : they are exercised forty years in the wilderness, in which they had many a sad day, ere they entered the land of Canaan.

2d Inst. The like we may see in the church of Israel, (1 Sam.). The Lord gave a great deliverance from the Philistines by the ministry of his servant Samuel, and a glorious blessed work of reformation there was ; but all that was again destroyed by the hand of Saul, and persecution raised against the church of God.

3d Inst. A third instance ye will find, if ye will read the history of the reigns of Hezekiah and Manasseh, kings of Judah, as it is recorded in the second book of Chronicles. There was a great reformation in the days of Hezekiah, a covenant sworn by the king, princes, priests, and the whole body of the land ; all corruption cast out, the pure worship and ordinances of God set up ; but there was a dreadful trial by the hand of Sennacherib : so, scarcely was Hezekiah well in his grave, till Manasseh succeeds in his room, and brings in corruption and persecution both at once.

4th Inst. A fourth instance was in the days of Josiah. How much of the power, and glory of the Lord is manifested ; but how sad a trial comes on the back of it, that the church seems to be wholly defaced by the king of Babylon.

5th Inst. A fifth instance we will find, after the return

of Israel out of Babylon. In the 4th of Ezra, the foundation of the Lord's house is laid; but in a little while the work is interrupted (till the second year of Darius the king), by the derision and enmity of wicked men.

6th Inst. A like instance you shall also find in the New Testament. Look what a length our blessed Lord brought the work of the gospel: but what follows in the 16th of John? 31, 32 verses, "Do ye now believe? Behold the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone." And he is crucified, and laid in his grave, and a stone laid on the grave's mouth, and little appearance that ever there should have been more mention of him in the land of the living.

7th Inst. Then look at another instance in the days of the apostles. In the 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, and 5th chapters of the Acts, what a blessed reformation there was; but in the close of the 6th, chapter, and in the beginning of the 8th, ye see what a sad interruption and scattering is in the church, and a great persecution raised against it.

8th Inst. And as there are many instances in the word, so there are many instances in the story of the church. Many great things were done by the apostles, and a glorious reformation there was in the bringing in of the Gentiles; but how dreadful a persecution is raised through all the world.

9th Inst. And there is a notable instance, when the Lord began to reform the church from the darkness of popery, by that worthy instrument Luther. But shortly after, did not Charles the Fifth raise a cruel war, against all the princes of Germany, and raised cruel edicts against all that clave to the church?

10th Inst. And also, in the days of king Edward the Sixth, that good prince, what a glorious work was in England. But a few years after that godly prince died, Queen Mary succeeds, brings in popery, and raises a bitter persecution against the saints of God.

11th Inst. And ye cannot be so great strangers to your

own condition at home ; how sad an interruption the work of reformation met from the prelates not long ago.

So that there is nothing more ordinary in the church, than after the Lord has communicated himself in a special way in his power and glory, to exercise them with sad storms and tempests on the back of it.

Concerning this dispensation, we would first inquire a little into the grounds and reasons of it, why the Lord sees it fit to do so ? Next, into the kinds of it, or in what several ways it is, that he sees it fit so to do ?

For the reasons, grounds, and causes of it, we shall not speak of many, though many might be spoken of, but shortly touch some of the most common and obvious.

Reason 1. First, the Lord makes such a changing of his dealing, with his church, for the chastising of their sin, and correcting of their iniquity. A people to whom he manifests himself in his power, and glory, and mercy, and truth, do not always behave themselves as they ought to do, but even while he is dealing kindly with them they do many ways provoke him to wrath. Therefore God for correcting their sin, and chastising their iniquity, brings troubles and storms upon them. In the 99th Psalm, the Lord is brought to take vengeance on the inventions of his people in the wilderness. That ye may understand this the better, look at the 78th Psalm, which is a clear commentary to this, where his rod wherewith he punished that people in the wilderness, and delayed their entrance into Canaan, and their sin both are set down ; their unsteadfastness in the Lord's covenant. Ye may look out some of the proofs of these sins.

1st Sin. First, in the 10th and 11th verses of Psalm lxxviii., " They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law : And forgot his works and wonders that he had shewed them." They were unsteadfast in the Lord's covenant. In the 19th and 20th chapters of Exodus, they entered into a most solemn covenant with God, that all

of them undertook to stand to, and to prove faithful therein ; but they kept not his covenant, but dealt deceitfully in it, therefore he brought such storms on them in the wilderness, and so long suspended their entrance in the promised land.

2d Sin. A second sin is in the 18th verse. They sinned yet more, “and tempted him in their hearts, by asking meat for their lusts.” They are not satisfied with the things that God has allowed them, but lusted after strange things, and became lustful in their appetites : therefore God is wroth, and thus exerciseth them in the wilderness.

3d Sin. A third sin is in the 22d verse : their diffidence and unbelief. They believed not God, and trusted not in his salvation, they put tempting questions concerning his power and goodness in the 19th verse, “Can God furnish a table in the wilderness ?” Therefore he thus exercised them with storms.

4th Sin. A fourth sin is, they despised and undervalued the precious manna, which God sent down from heaven, for feeding of them, “Our soul loatheth this light bread,” (Numb. xxi. 5).

5th Sin. A fifth sin is, their murmuring, grudging and repining against God.

6th Sin. A sixth sin is, their complaint of coming out of Egypt ; their rebelling, and speaking of a captain to return back again.

7th Sin. The last sin is, their corrupting the worship of God, and making a golden calf. And because of these sins, the Lord is angry, and correcteth and chastises them forty years long in the wilderness.

Reason 2. A second reason is, the Lord’s bringing sad storms on the back of the glorious manifestations of himself in his word and works, is for purging of his people. As he will correct them, and have them to know the bitterness of their sin, so he will have them to be purged of it. There is a sad trial in the 11th of Daniel, and this is given as the reason of it ; to purge, to try, and to make white : in the 35th verse, “and some of understanding shall fall, to try

them, and to make them white, even to the time of the end ; because it is yet for a time appointed." There is in the Church and people of God, much dross, therefore he sees it necessary they be put to the fire, for purging away of their dross.

Reas. 3. A third reason, wherefore the Lord brings sad storms on the back of glorious manifestations of himself is, for discovering and bringing forth the hypocrites, and such as are unsound, (Daniel xi. 34). Many cleave to the Lord's people by flattery : especially it is so, when the Lord is eminently appearing, and revealing himself gloriously in his word and works ; many then undertake a profession in whose hearts there is no sincerity and truth ; many then cleave to the cause and work of God by flattery, which his soul cannot endure ; therefore he brings a winnowing fan, and lets them up before the wind, that he may know who is chaff and who is corn. " He doth good to those that are upright in heart : but as for such as turn aside to crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity," (Psa. cxxv. 4, 5). Therefore for discovery of such, he sends sad storms on the back of reformation.

Another reason of the Lord's bringing sad storms and tempests on his people, on the back of glorious manifestations of himself, is, that he may prove and take a trial of the integrity, faith, and patience of his saints ; and in trying of them to purchase glory to himself, and a name to them. " That the trial of your faith (being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire), might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ," (1 Pet. i. 7).

There is also a reason concerning adversaries which we shall not now meddle with.

But we come to the second point,—How it is, or in what several sorts of ways it is, that the Lord is pleased thus to dispense, I mean, to send storms and trials on his servants and people, immediately on the back of some glorious ap-

pearanee, and notable works of kindness and merey amongst them. There might be a great many ways named, how the Lord is pleased to do thus: we shall name only four generals.

1st Way. First, he does it sometimes by interrupting of his work. Thus he did it in that plaee eited before, Ezra iv. After the foundation of the Lord's house is laid, a company of malignant men, enemies to the poor people of God and his work, who are exceedingly ill satisfied that the work of God should prosper, eome, by all means to interrupt the work of God; and when they eould not prevail by flattery, they go to the king of Persia, and load the people of God with false aspersions, that they were about to rebel, &c., by which suggestions, they obtain letters from the king, commanding them to eease building of the temple, and when the eopy of the king's letter was read, they made them to eease by force and power.

2d Way. A seeond way is, by eorruption, when he suffers evil instruments, not only to make an interruption, but to make a corruption, so to speak, and to mingle these with the purity of his ordinanees and worship. God raises up ill instruments, to make people liek up the vomit of these eorruptions, whieh have been formerly east out. There had been a blessed reformation in the days of Hezekiah, and all eorruption east out; but all that eorruption is brought in again in the days of Manasseh, and more and worse than ever had been before.

3d Way. A third way is, by destruction, so to speak; not only when the work of God is interrupted and corrupted, but when it is destroyed and taken away. There is in the days of Zedekiah, a total destroying of the temple, and all the work.

The fourth way is, by persecution to those that eleave to the truth and work of God. Thus it was in the days of the apostles, (Aets v.). They fall on the ministers of the Lord's house, and slay some of them with the sword, and put others in prison, "so that they eould not preach the

word in Jerusalem." Some one, or all of these ways, the Lord sets on foot such dispensations.

USE I. We would now speak somewhat of the use we should make of it. And, first, it says this to us, that we of this church and nation should be looking for a storm: the Lord hath been graciously pleased to make glorious discoveries of his power and mercy in his word and works amongst us, now these many years, and even on that account, we should be looking for a storm; and we shall give you these few reasons wherefore we should look for it.

Reas. 1. Because (as I told you) it is ordinary with God in his dispensations to his people, to knit these two together, with great manifestations of his mercy, to bring troubles, tempests, and trials, as ye will find frequently in the word.

Reas. 2. A second reason wherefore we should look for a storm, is, because we are guilty of these sins that bring on storms on the Church and people of God. We have told you what storms came on Israel in the wilderness after their coming out of Egypt; and we have told you their sin that brought them on; unstedfastness in the Lord's covenant, murmuring against God, tempting of God, diffidence and unbelief; despising and loathing of the precious manna, their rebelling against God, their corrupting of the worship and ordinances of God, &c. See if we be not guilty of all these sins. Have we not been unstedfast in the covenant? Is not the obligation thereof in great measure forgotten? And who has remembered to perform his vow unto the Lord, almost in any thing, either in the national, or solemn league and covenant? Are we not guilty of lusting, and not satisfied with the things that God hath given us, but the heart is carried away with the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life? Are we not guilty of repining against God? Are we not guilty of despising and loathing the precious manna of the gospel? Are we not guilty of unbelief and tempting of God? Are we not guilty of corrupting the ordinances of God, and spoiling many of his precious truths? And are there not many speaking of making

a captain to return again to Egypt, and to involve themselves in the bondage of all these corruptions which have been formerly cast out, and engaged against in the covenant? And if for these things God brought storms on them, how shall we avoid them?

Reas. 3. A third thing that says there is a storm coming, is, because these amongst whom He doth eminently manifest himself he doth also eminently try them, that he may bring forth their faith and patience. We have had trials, but none of us have resisted unto blood, they have been but fresh-water trials: The trials are not answerable to these eminent dispensations enjoyed. We have but run with the footmen, and have not yet contended with the horsemen; we have not yet swimmied in the swellings of Jordan, (Jer. xii. 5.)

Reas. 4. A fourth thing that says there is a storm coming, is, because that there is among us a huge multitude of hollow-hearted men joined in the covenant with treacherous hearts. The Lord hath brought forth many of these already, but it is like there will be more visible discoveries, that will make men disown and disavow the covenant of God.

Reas. 5. Another thing that says ye should look for a storm, is, because that is already begun. The wind of the Lord's fan is already begun to blow; several who were eminent in the work of the Lord are imprisoned; several ambassadors of the Lord's house cast out: and doth not this say that there is a storm coming?

Reas. 6. And lastly, This says that ye should look for a storm, because all the wicked, and these that have been enemies to the people of God, are already lifting up the head; and that is aye the prognostic of a storm.

USE II. The second Use is, as we should look for a storm, so we should not stumble at it when it comes, because it is the work of our God; it is the ordinary path-road that the Lord uses to take or give in his dispensations to his Church. There are several sorts of stumblings that folk fall in, when

the Lord is pleased to bring storms on his Church and people, all of them we should beware of.

1. First, the stumbling of the children of Israel that we read of. When storms were like to rise, they stumble so far as to speak of quitting the work of the Lord, and not marching on further to take possession of the promised land: and they speak of making a captain to return back again to Egypt. We should fear that that shall be the stumbling of many in these times; that they shall take a resolution to quit all the work of God, and the work of reformation, and be content to be carried back to these corruptions from whence they were (by the merey of God) delivered. That is a most dreadful stumbling: we warn you of it, and we beseech you in the name of the Lord to take heed to it.

2. A second sort of stumbling that we should beware of, is, the stumbling of Doeg the Edomite, (2 Sam. xxii). When a storm was like to arise upon the Church and people of God, he stumbles so far at these things, as he falls to be an accuser of those that had been employed in the work of God and walked in their integrity; to accuse honest holy David, and from an accuser came to be an open persecutor of the people of God. We should take heed, that for currying of favour to ourselves, we be not accusers of others. This is the way of many in these nations; they know no other way of currying of favour to themselves, but by becoming accusers of the saints of God. Look to it, for in a while ye will turn open persecutors. When none would fall on the priests of the Lord, Doeg the Edomite (ere he lost the favour he had gotten) would fall on them.

3. A third sort of stumbling that we should beware of, is, the stumbling of Shébná, treasurer or scribe, (Isa. xxii). When Sennacherib invaded Judah, though he pretended friendship, yet he in a secret way complied with Sennacherib, and so far as lay in him supplanted good king Hezekiah, and the people of God; we should take heed of that.

4. Another sort of stumbling that we would beware of, is, that stumbling of Demas (2 Tim. iv. 10), who when

a storm arises, he thought it meet to shift for himself, and embrace this present world. "Demas has forsaken us (says Paul), having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica." Look we pray you in this place, to that that is most like to be your temptation, viz. the lust of the things of the world, if ye will prove stedfast in the cause that ye have owned ; and therefore we should study to have our hearts loosed from these things that will make you stumble in a stormy day.

5. Another sort of stumbling that we should beware of, is the stumbling of Baruch (Jer. xlv. 3). When he and Jeremiah were like to be put to death, for the cause that they were engaged unto, he fainted and was afraid. "Wo is me (says he), for the Lord has added grief to my sorrow, I fainted in my sighing, and I found no rest." We should take heed that we faint not, neither be of a fearful heart, own the cause of God, and interest of Jesus Christ. Yea, that carnal fear carries Peter so far as to deny his Lord and Master.

6. We should beware of the stumbling of Judas, who (when he got not the thing he would have been at, by the following of Jesus Christ) resolves to betray his Master. Look that disappointments in following the cause of Christ, make you not turn treacherous unto it.

And, lastly, We should beware of the stumbling of the men of Judah, (Jer. xlv). Jeremiah would have had them staying in the land of Judah, and they would not, but would go down to the land of Egypt. And they tell him, "It was better with us (say they) when we burnt incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink-offerings unto her, for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil." We should take heed that nothing make us to call in question the cause of God. that we have been engaged in.

USE III. A third Use ; if it be so, that tempests and storms are like to blow, then we should be careful to prepare for them.

A few things we would name, that we should look to for preparing of us.

1st, We should study to have our ship as light of all unnecessary burdens as we can. I mean all things of a present world, all things beside God and our precious soul; we should have as little weight of these things on our spirits as we may, for they will sink our ship in a storm.

2dly, We should be careful to make friendship with Jesus Christ, that blessed pilot, that we may get him in the ship with us, for we are not able to steer our ship in a storm.

3dly, We should be careful to keep a low sail, to have our spirits humble and low before the Lord, for the humble soul is most like to hold out when the wind and storm blows.

4thly, We should be careful to get the knowledge of the cause that we profess; for indeed a dark night is ill to sail in when the wind blows, and when there are quicksands before us.

And, lastly, We should be careful to have our ship well ballasted with the faith and patience of the saints.

USE IV. We would consider what grounds of consolation we shall have for strengthening of our hearts, if we bide fast by the cause of Jesus Christ, for the biding out of a storm, if so be God be pleased to bring it on us.

We might name many, only at this time take these few. The first ground of encouragement, is, that you have a good cause, I mean the cause of God, and the interest of Jesus Christ. Speak against it who will, forsake it who will, reproach and persecute it who will, doubtless, good is the cause, the cause is worth the contending for, worth the suffering any thing that can come for it.

2dly, Another thing to be a ground of comfort to us, is, as we have a good cause, so we have a good Captain too, Jesus Christ the Lord, who is the Captain and Prince of salvation, who was never put to the worse, and who sits at the right hand of the Father, and will reign there till he make all his enemies his footstool.

3dly, Another thing to be a ground of consolation to us

is, as we have a good cause, and a good captain, so we have good company too ; all in whose hearts the fear of the Lord is in these three nations ; yea more, we have all the saints that have lived since the beginning of the world ; for all the cause they have owned and suffered for, is one and the same, though there be sundry branches of it : we have also the blessed promises of God, and we have the experience of all the saints ; we have also our own experiences, and many things more of that kind. Oh that we knew our privileges, for strengthening of our hearts to be sincere and stedfast in his work ! And so we close.

LAST SPEECH UPON THE SCAFFOLD,

JUNE 1. 1661.

MEN and brethren, I fear many of you are come hither to gaze, rather than to be edified by the carriage and last words of a dying man ; but if any have an ear to hear, as I hope some of this great confluence have, I desire your audience to a few words. I am come hither to lay down this earthly tabernacle and mortal flesh of mine, and I bless God, through his grace, I do it willingly, and not by constraint. I say, I suffer willingly. If I had been so minded, I might have made a diversion, and not been a prisoner ; but being conscious to myself of nothing worthy of death or of bonds, I would not stain my innocence with the suspicion of guiltiness, by withdrawing. Neither have I wanted opportunities and advantages to escape since I was a prisoner, not by the fault of my keepers, God knoweth, but otherwise ; but neither for this had I light or liberty, lest I should

reflect upon the Lord's name, and offend the generation of the righteous. And if some men have not been mistaken, or dealt deecitfully in telling me so, I might have avoided not only the severity of the sentence, but also had much favour and countenance, by complying with the courses of the times. But I durst not redeem my life with the loss of my integrity : God knoweth, I durst not ; and that since I was a prisoner, he hath so holden me by the hand, that he never suffered me to bring it in debate in my inward thoughts, much less to propone or hearken to any overture of that kind. I did judge it better to suffer than to sin ; and therefore, I am come hither to lay down my life this day, and I bless God, I die not as a fool ; not that I have any thing wherein to glory in myself : I acknowledge that I am a sinner, yea, one of the greatest and vilest that has owned a profession of religion, and one of the most unworthy that has preached the gospel. My corruptions have been strong and many, and have made me a sinner in all things, yea, even in following my duty ; and therefore, righteousness have I none of my own, all is vile. But I do believe " that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, whereof I am chief ;" through faith in his righteousness and blood have I obtained merey ; and through him, and in him alone, have I the hope of a blessed conquest and victory over sin and Satan, and hell and death, and that I shall attain unto the resurrection of the just, and be made partaker of eternal life. " I know in whom I have believed, and that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. I have preached salvation through his name, and as I have preached, so do I believe, and do commend the riches of his free grace and faith in his name unto you all, as the only way whereby ye can be saved.

And, as I bless the Lord, that I die not as a fool, so also that I die not for evil doing. Not a few of you may haply judge that I suffer as a thief, or as a murderer, or as an evil-doer, or as a busy-body in other men's matters. It was the lot of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, and of many

of his precious servants and people, to suffer by the world as evil-doers ; and as my soul scarceth not at it, but desireth to rejoice in being brought into conformity with my blessed Head, and so blessed a company in this thing ; so I desire and pray, that I may be to none of you to-day upon this account a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence. Blessed is he that shall not be offended at Jesus Christ, and his poor servants and members, because of their being condemned as evil-doers by the world. God is my record, that in these things for which sentence of death hath passed against me, I have a good conscience. I bless God they are not matters of compliance with sectaries, or designs or practices against his majesty's person or government, or the person and government of his royal father. My heart, I bless God, is conscious to no disloyalty, nay, loyal I have been, and I commend it to you to be loyal and obedient in the Lord. True piety is the foundation of true loyalty. A wicked man may be a flatterer and a time server, but he will never be a loyal subject.

But to return to my purpose ; the matters for which I am condemned, are matters belonging to my calling and function as a minister of the gospel, such as the discovery and reproof of sin, the pressing and the holding fast of the path of God in the covenant, and preserving and carrying the work of religion and reformation according thereto, and denying to acknowledge the civil magistrate, as the proper competent immediate judge in causes ecclesiastical. That in all these things, which God so ordering by his gracious providence, are the grounds of my indictment and death, I have a good conscience, as having walked therein according to the light and rule of God's word, and as it did become a minister of the gospel.

I do also bless the Lord that I do not die as one not desired. I know that by not a few, I neither have been nor am desired. It hath been my lot to have been a man of contention and sorrow ; but it is my comfort that for my own things I have not contended, but for the things of Jesus

Christ, for what relateth to his interest and work ; and the well-being of his people. In order to the preserving and promoting of these, I did protest against, and stood in opposition unto these late assemblies at St Andrews, Dundee, and Edinburgh, and the public resolutions for bringing the malignant party into the judicatories and armies of this kingdom, conceiving the same contrary to the word of God, and to our solemn covenant engagements ; and to be an inlet to the defection, and to the ruin and destruction of the work of God. And it is now manifest to many consciences that I have not been therein mistaken, and was not fighting against a man of straw. I was also desirous, and did use some poor endeavours, to have the church of God purged of insufficient, and scandalous, and corrupt ministers and elders : for these things I have been mistaken by some, and hated by others. But I bless the Lord, as I had the testimony of my own conscience, so I was and am therein approven in the consciences of many of the Lord's precious servants and people ; and however so little I may die desired by some, yet by these I know I do die desired, and their approbation, and prayers, and affection is of more value with me than the contradiction, or reproach, or hatred of many others. The love of the one I cannot recompense, and the mistake, or hatred, or reproach of the other I do with all my heart forgive ; and wherein I have offended any of them, I do beg their mercy and forgiveness. I do from my soul wish that my death may be profitable unto both, that the one may be confirmed and established in the straight ways of the Lord ; and that the other, if the Lord so will, may be convinced, and cease from these things that are not good, and do not edify but destroy.

One thing I would warn you all of,—that God is wroth, yea, very wroth with Scotland, and threateneth to depart and remove his candlestick. The causes of his wrath are many ; and would to God it were not one great cause, that causes of wrath are despised and rejected of men ! Consider the cause that is recorded (Jer. xxxvi.), and the conse-

quence of it, and tremble and fear. I cannot but also say, that there is a great addition and increase of wrath. First, By that deluge of profanity that overfloweth all the land, and hath reins loosed unto it every where, in so far that many have lost, not only all use and exercise of religion, but even of morality, and that common civility that is to be found amongst the heathen. Second, By that horrible treachery and perjury that is in the matter of the covenant, the cause of God, and work of reformation. "Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be ye horribly afraid, and be ye very desolate, saith the Lord, for my people have committed two great evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no waters." Shall he break the covenant and prosper? Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with God, which frameth mischief by a law? I fear the Lord is about to bring a sword on these lands, which shall avenge the quarrel of his covenant. Third, Horrible ingratitude: the Lord after ten years' oppression and bondage, hath broken the yoke of strangers from off our necks; but what do we render unto him for this goodness? Most of the fruit of our delivery is, to work wickedness, and to strengthen ourselves to do evil. Fourth, A most dreadful idolatry, and sacrificing to the creature: we have "changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into the image of corruptible man," in whom many have placed almost all their salvation and desire, and have turned that which might have been a blessing unto us (being kept in a due line of subordination under God) into an idol of jealousy, by preferring it before him. God is also wroth with a generation of carnal, corrupt, time-serving ministers. I know and bear testimony, that in the Church of Scotland, there is a true and faithful ministry: blessed be God, we have yet many, who study their duty, and desire to be found faithful to their Lord and Master; and I pray you to honour, and reverence, and esteem much of these for their works' sake; and I pray them to be encouraged in their Lord and Master, who is

with them, to make them as iron pillars and brazen walls, and as a strong defended city in the faithful following of their duty. But oh ! that there were not too many, who mind “earthly things, and are enemies to the cross of Jesus Christ;” who push with the side and shoulder, who strengthen the hands of evil-doers, who make themselves transgressors, by studying to build again what they did formerly warrantably destroy ; I mean prelaey, and the ceremonies, and the service book, a mystery of iniquity that works amongst us, whose steps lead unto the house of the great whore “Babylon, the mother of fornication;” or whosoever he be that buildeth this Jericho again, let him take heed of the curse of Hiel the Bethelite, and of that flying roll threatened, (Zech. v.) And let all ministers take heed that they watch, and be stedfast in the faith, and quit themselves like men, and be strong ; and give faithful and seasonable warning concerning sin and duty. Many of the Lord’s people do sadly complain of the fainting and silence of many watchmen, and it concerneth them to consider what God calleth for at their hands in such a day : silence now in a watchman, when he is so much called to speak, and give his testimony, upon the peril of his life, is doubtless a great sin. The Lord open the mouths of his servants, to speak his word with all boldness, that covenant-breaking may be discovered and reproved, and that the kingdom of Jesus Christ may not be supplanted, nor the souls of his people be destroyed without a witness.

I have but a few words more to add : all that are profane amongst you, I exhort them to repentance, for the day of the Lord’s vengeance hasteneth, and is near ; but there is yet a door of mercy open for you, if you will not despise the day of salvation. All that are maligners, and reproachers, and persecutors of godliness, and of such as live godly, take heed what ye do ; it will be hard for you to kick against the pricks : you make yourselves the butt of the Lord’s fury, and his flaming indignation, if you do not cease from, and repent of all your hard speeches and ungodly deeds. All

that are neutral, and indifferent, and lukewarm professors, be zealous and repent, lest the Lord “spue you out of his mouth.” You that lament after the Lord, and mourn for all the abominations that are done in this city, and in the land, and take pleasure in the stones and dust of Zion, cast not away your confidence, but be comforted and encouraged in the Lord ; he will yet appear to your joy. God has not cast away his people, nor work in Britain and Ireland : I hope it will once more revive by the power of his spirit, and take root downward, and bear fruit upward, and of this I am now confident. There is yet a holy seed and precious remnant, whom God will preserve, and bring forth ; but how long or dark our night may be, I do not know ; the Lord shorten it for the sake of his chosen. In the mean while, be ye patient and “stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord,” and in love one to another ; beware of snares which are strewed thick ; cleave to the covenant and work of reformation ; do not decline the cross of Jesus Christ, “choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season,” and account the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of the world.

Let my death grieve none of you ; it will be more profitable and advantageous both for me, and for you, and for the church of God, and for Christ’s interest and honour, than my life could have been. I forgive all men the guilt of it, and I desire you to do so also. Pray for them that persecute you, and bless them that curse you ; bless, I say, and curse not. I die in the faith of the Apostles, and primitive Christians, and Protestant Reformed Churches, particularly of the Church of Scotland, whereof I am a member and minister. I do bear my witness and testimony to the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the Church of Scotland, by Kirk-sessions, Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies. Popery and Prelacy, and all the trumpery of service and ceremonies that wait upon them, I do abhor. I do bear my witness unto the National Covenant of Scotland, and

the Solemn League and Covenant betwixt the three kingdoms of Scotland, England, and Ireland; these sacred, solemn, public oaths of God I believe can be loosed or dispensed with by no person, nor party, nor power upon earth; but are still binding upon these kingdoms, and will be for ever hereafter; and are ratified and sealed by the conversion of many thousand souls since our entering thereinto. I bear my witness to the protestation against the controverted assemblies and the public resolutions; to the testimonies given against the sectaries, against the course of backsliding and defection that is now on foot in the land, and all the branches and parts thereof, under whatsoever name or notion, or acted by whatsoever party or person. And in the last place, I bear my witness to the cross of Jesus Christ, and that I never had cause, nor have cause this day to repent, because of any thing I have suffered, or can now suffer, for his name: I take God to record upon my soul, I would not exchange this scaffold with the palace or mitre of the greatest prelate in Britain.

Blessed be God, who hath shewed mercy to such a wretch, and hath revealed his Son unto me, and made me a minister of the everlasting gospel; and that he hath deigned, in the midst of much contradiction from Satan and the world, to seal my ministry upon the hearts of not a few of his people, and especially in the station wherein I was last, I mean the congregation and presbytery of Stirling; and I hope the Lord will visit that congregation and presbytery once more with faithful pastors. God forgive the poor empty man that did there intrude upon my labours, and hath made a prey of many poor souls, and exposed others to reproach and oppression, and a famine of the word of the Lord. God forgive the misleaders of that part of the poor people, who tempted them to reject their own pastor, and to admit of intruders; and the Father of mercies pity that poor misled people; and the Lord visit the congregation and presbytery of Stirling once more with faithful pastors, and grant that the work and people of God may be revived through all Britain, and over all the

world. Jesus Christ is my light and my life, my righteousness, my strength and my salvation, and all my desire ; him, oh, him, I do with all the strength of my soul commend unto you. Blessed are they that are not offended in him ; blessed are they that trust in him. Bless him, O my soul, from henceforth even for ever. Rejoice, rejoice, all ye that love him, be patient, and rejoice in tribulation : blessed are you, and blessed shall you be for ever and ever ; everlasting righteousness and eternal salvation are yours ; all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour thou bearest to thy people : Oh visit me with thy salvation, that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the good of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance." "Now, let thy servant depart in peace, since mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

CONSIDERATIONS

CONTRIBUTING UNTO THE DISCOVERY OF THE DANGERS
THAT THREATEN RELIGION AND THE WORK OF
REFORMATION IN THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

“The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?”—AMOS iii. 8.

“What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God; if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.”—JONAH i. 6.

“I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”—REV. ii. 5.

PREFACE.

THE true Protestant religion, as reformed in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, in the Church of Scotland, is a pearl of so incomparable value and price, that the very hearing and apprehension of any danger threatening its spoil and ruin, cannot but affect every soul that knoweth the worth, and is in love with the beauty thereof; especially the hearts of all the genuine and true-born sons and daughters of God, who have received their spiritual life and being therein, and do grow up under the shadow thereof: how much more ought it, and I hope doth it, affect thee when such dangers do threaten the same, as we nor our fathers have not heard nor seen the like since the time of reformation from popery. These in the year 1588, from the Spanish Armada without, and from the plottings and practices of papists within, seem in many respects nothing comparable to these of this time; and though I be far from extenuating the hazard that

religion stood in under prelacy, (especially when the Service book and the Book of Canons were violently obtruded upon this Church), or from reflecting upon the necessary, and just, and laudable opposition that was made thereunto; yet I do believe, that upon sober and serious examination, it will be found by men of judgment and understanding (who are pleased to make the parallel) to involve nothing contrary to the words of soberness and truth, to assert, that the hazard of religion is greater now than it was then, and that the tokens and prognostics of a dreadful night of darkness and desolation upon the sanctuary of the Lord in this land, are more and more pregnant now than they were at that time. The General Assembly of this Church thought that they had reason thus to speak in the year 1647, in their brotherly exhortation to England. "We cannot," say they, "but look upon the danger of the true reformed religion in this island as greater now than before; not only for that these very principles and fundamentals of faith, which under prelacy, yea, under popery itself, were generally received as uncontroverted, are now by the scepticism of many sectaries of this time, either oppugned or called in question; but also, because instead of carrying on reformation towards perfection, that which hath been already built is in part cast down, and in danger to be wholly overthrown, through the endeavours of sectaries to comply with many of the prelatical and malignant party, and their joining hand in hand, and casting in their lots, and interweaving their interests together, in way of combination against the covenant and presbyterial government; yea, the unclean spirit which was cast out, is about to enter in again with seven other spirits worse than himself, and so the latter end like to be worse than the beginning." If there was ground for such a warning and complaint above twelve years ago, when the toleration of errors and heresies was not enacted by a law, and the parliament of England and the Assembly of Divines at Westminster were proceeding in the work of reformation and uniformity in religion, and the State and Church of Scotland were in their inte-

grity, how much more now, under all the evils that have since come to pass in both nations, and which do grow upon us day by day, and are come to such a height, that without a wonderful and mighty hand of gracious Providence interposing to preserve religion, it seems to be nigh to ruin amongst us, and that our land shall be involved in darkness, and plunged in the depths of atheism, and error, and popery, and profanity.

The thought of these things, as they did induce me two or three months ago to pen these Considerations, tending to the discovery of the dangers that threaten religion, and the work of reformation in this Church ; so hath it now persuaded me to send the same abroad with the former testimony ; that by easting these few mites into the public treasury of the sanctuary, I might, according to my weak measure, contribute and concur with other more faithful and able ministers and witnesses of Jesus Christ in the land, for informing of the ignorant and inadvertent, for rebuking of the careless and indifferent, for awakening such as are secure, for warning of such as have left their first love that they may remember whence they are fallen, and repent, and do the first works ; and for stirring up of those who have received the truth in love, to be zealous for the Lord of Hosts, and valiant for his truth upon the earth, by standing in the breach, and contending diligently for the faith once delivered to the saints ; for persuading unto the exercise of repentance and faith towards God, and to watchfulness and tenderness in duty, and unto cordial and well-grounded union in the Lord, that we may all of us, in subordination to him, with one shoulder, to the utmost of our power, by all lawful means in our stations and callings, faithfully endeavour the preservation of religion and the work of reformation ; that the blessed truths of the gospel, and precious ordinances of Jesus Christ, being preserved amongst us in their purity and integrity, they may be transmitted without spot to our posterity. I do not doubt, but discerning eyes may see more dangers than I have spoke

unto : I have but pointed at a few, and if any shall judge this discovery to be defective, I shall be glad, and not think my labour lost, if they may but thereby be provoked to give a more distinct and full sound in these things. It will haply be the expectation and desire of some, that something should be spoken also for discovering of these duties that the Lord calls for at our hands, for preserving of religion in the midst of so many dangers ; somewhat of duty there is, which the discovery of the several dangers doth by native and clear consequence point forth : the whole would be a work very difficult and comprehensive, and that doth require much light and leisure. Therefore, hoping that it may be done to better purpose by those of more prudence and authority in the church, I shall for the present forbear to meddle further therein ; and wishing that the little which I have done in the first part of the work, concerning the discovery of the dangers, may be accepted of the saints, and contribute for thy edification, I do continue thy servant, for Jesus' sake, in the work of the gospel,

JAMES GUTHRIE.

CONSIDERATIONS, &c.

CONSIDERATION FIRST.—*From that swarm of pestilent errors and heresies that doth abound in the neighbour nation of England, and our vicinity thereunto, and intimate and daily correspondence therewith.*

IT is far from my purpose to cast any imputation upon England, or to render the neighbour church and nation vile in the eyes of any, by discovering of their nakedness, in reckoning out the many pestilent errors and heresies that many therein are infected with. I know there be many thousands in that land who have not bowed their knees to Baal, nor defiled their garments by departing away from the faith, but do sadly bemoan and faithfully bear witness against the falling away of others. And I do easily acknowledge that England hath a great and honourable company of precious, and sound, and able, and godly ministers and professors, as readily are to be found in any nation or church upon the earth. But I hope it will be no injury nor offence to any to say, (and would to God that I could speak it with that compassionate resentment, and serious affectedness of heart that doth become in so sad and soul-concerning a case,) that a great many in that church and nation are infected with many noisome errors, and pestilent heresies, which fret as a gangrene unto the destroying of many poor souls. Is there almost any of the precious and necessary truths of God but hath some opposers and contradictors in England? Not only are the beautiful superstructures thrown down, but the very lowest and most necessary foundations of the Christian religion razed and plucked up by the roots, by the blasphemies of some. To dispute and declaim, and write against the blessed Trinity ; against the divinity of the

eternal Son of God, Jesus Christ, who is over all, God blessed for ever ; against the sacred Scriptures that they are not the word of God, are with not a few, things common and ordinary. Yea, these very things which Jews and Mahometans, and not a few in pagan nations do acknowledge, and which being denied, the condition of a man is made little better than that of a beast ; such as the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the dead, heaven and hell, eternal rewards and eternal punishments, are by divers wantonly debated, and by some pertinaciously denied and oppugned. The time was, and that not many years ago, when Independency, Erastianism, Brownism, and Anabaptism in that land, were looked upon as threatening danger to the churches and work of reformation in these nations ; yet, in comparison to the errors that now abound in England, these are but as mole-hills to mountains. The whole body of Arminianism, Antinomianism, Pelagianism, Socinianism, Familism, Quakerism, and almost what not that hath at any time been broached by the father of lies, and infested the Christian church, but hath some brokers and patrons there.

That these things are so, is but too sadly true ; and these things being so, is not the Church of Scotland by reason of its vicinity unto, and intimate and daily correspondence and commerce with England, in imminent hazard to be tainted with infection thereby. The vicinity and near neighbourhood of nations and churches, especially when attended with intimate and ordinary fellowship, hath always had great influence upon the manners of one another, chiefly as to the depraving and corrupting of religion, to which all the sons of men, by reason of their inbred ignorance and instability, and the power of corrupt imaginations, are of themselves but too prone. The children of Israel, not only when they lived in the land of Egypt, were infected with many idolatrous and heathenish customs (Ezek. xxiii. 27), but even when separated and brought into Canaan, albeit railed in and fenced with the holy and perfect law of the Lord, to which was added the sanction of many great and precious

promises to such as did obey, and of many dreadful threatenings against the disobedient and rebellious, which were accordingly verified by God in eminent acts of his justice and goodness;—the idolatrous opinions and practices of their neighbour nations had such influence upon them, that they could not be kept (scaree at any time for one generation together) from learning their works, and going a whoring after their corrupt customs, (Psal. vi. 35–39). Yea, they sometimes came to be worse than the heathen, whom the Lord had destroyed before them (2 Chron. xxxiii. 9), and to change his judgments into wickedness, more than the nations, and his statutes more than the countries that were round about them (Ezek. v. 6), especially after that religion came to be corrupted amongst the ten tribes by Jeroboam's erecting the calves at Dan and at Bethel. Judah and Jerusalem, though they had the temple, and the ark, and the oracle, and the altar, with all the other ordinances of God, and also many prophets arising up early, and speaking to them in the name of the Lord, did then become treacherous (Jer. iii. 11). Aholah saw what Aholibah had done; she became more corrupt in her inordinate love than she, and in her whoredoms more than her sister, and her whoredoms—till the Lord saw that she was defiled, and that they took both one way, (Ezek. xxiii. 11, 13).

The histories of the English and Scots nations and churches, do testify, that they have for the most part run one lot, both as to their reforming and corrupting of religion: this consideration was the prime ground of these bonds and confederacies that were transacted, first, between Elizabeth Queen of England, and the Lords of the Congregation in Scotland, and afterwards between that Queen and King James VI. It was also this especially, that did induce these nations and churches to engage themselves in the Solemn League and Covenant, anno 1643, because (as it is expressed by the ministers of England in their letter to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, anno 1641), “they did know and acknowledge that these Churches of England and Scot-

land, seem to be embarked in the same bottom, to sink and swim together, and are nigh conjoined by so many strong ties, not only as fellow-members under the same head, Christ, and fellow-subjects under the same king, but also by such neighbourhood and vicinity of place, that if any evil should infest the one, the other cannot be altogether free; or if, for the present it should, yet, in process of time, it would sensibly suffer also," which is homologated by the Assembly in their answer to that letter: "We have learned (say they) by long experience, ever since the time of reformation, and especially after the two kingdoms have been by the great goodness of God to both, united under one head and monarch, but most of all, of late, which is not unknown to you, what danger and contagion in matters of kirk government, of divine worship, and of doctrine, may come from the one kirk to the other; which, besides all other reasons, may make us pray to God, and to desire you and all that love the honour of Christ, and the peace of these kirks and kingdoms, heartily to endeavour that there might be in both kirks one confession of faith, one directory for public worship, one catechism, and one form of kirk government." And the commissioners of the Parliament of England, in the propositions given by them to a Committee, to be presented to the General Assembly of this Church, anno 1643, for persuading of them to further and expedite the aid and assistance then demanded by both Houses from the kingdom of Scotland, after they have given them to understand that by reason of the prevailing of papists, the prelatical sanction, and other malignant enemies to those who desired reformation, the hopeful beginnings thereof were likely not only to be rendered ineffectual, but all the former evils, superstitions, and corruptions to be introduced by strong hand;—they do in the next place tell them, "That if once these should again take root in the Church and kingdom of England, they would quickly spread their venom and infection into the Church and kingdom of Scotland;" the truth of which being well known, both to our

Church and State, did prevail upon them to concur with England in counsels and forces, for suppressing and preventing of these things, as may be seen in their answers to the declarations of the honourable Houses of the Parliament of England, concerning that purpose. Upon the same ground, the Church of Scotland did frequently by her commissioners at London, and by her letters to the Parliament of England, and to the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, and by her exhortations to her brethren of England, often warn of the dangers of errors and heresies, when they were but yet in their first buddings, and far from the height that now they are at in England. The words of the Assembly in their declaration and brotherly exhortation to their brethren of England, anno 1647, are worth the repeating in this case. They say, while in the neighbour kingdom, "The staves of beauty and bands, covenant and brotherhood, are broken by many, the horn of malignants and sectaries exalted, the best affected borne down, reformation ebbing, heresy and schism flowing,—it can hardly be marvelled at by any person of prudence and discretion, if we be full of such fears and apprehensions as use to be in those who dwell near to a house set on fire, or a family infected, especially being taught by the sad experience of the prelatical times, how easily a gangrene in the one-half of this island may spread through the whole; knowing also the inveterate and insatiable malice of the enemies of this cause and covenant against this church and kingdom, which we cannot be ignorant of, unless we would shut our eyes, and stop our ears."

I might cite many things to this purpose out of the public records of both churches and nations, but these few, I hope, do sufficiently witness what were the thoughts and apprehensions of men of judgment and understanding in both, but a very few years ago, as to the danger of religion in Scotland, in the case of England's being infected with errors and heresies. And if there was reason then so to judge, how much more now, when besides the vicinity and contiguity of these two, and the daily commerce and correspondence

that is between the people thereof, Scotland is incorporated into one civil body and government with England, and hath also the bar of civil laws for keeping out, and curbing of many errors and heresies taken away, and toleration and protection allowed thereunto, by which it cometh to pass, that the danger which was formerly nigh unto us is now also in our bowels. And to this I shall speak in the next place.

CONSIDERATION SECOND.—*From the infection of errors and heresies already begun, and the footing that they have already got in this church and nation.*

THOUGH the plague when near unto us is dangerous, and fire in our neighbour's house can hardly be kept from taking hold of our own, yet infection in our own body is more dangerous, and much harder than it is to keep our house from burning when the fire hath already seized upon it, and the flames are flashing about our ears. And this is the case that the church of Scotland, and religion therein, do stand in at this day. Not only have we amongst us many strangers who vent their errors at will, and without controlment, but sundry also of our own church and nation are come to be infected therewith. The ministry of the land, though differing in that unhappy question about the public resolutions, yet are by the singular mercy and goodness of God, for any thing that doth yet appear, kept sound and unanimous in their judgments against the errors of the times; and so also is the body of the people according to the measure of their knowledge, in their several ranks and degrees; neither have sectaries so much cause to boast of their number and growth in Scotland as commonly they do give out. They are (blessed be the God of truth and of mercy for it) as yet but very few, and inconsiderable in comparison to the body of this church, scarce one to a thousand; yet is the infection such as ought not to be despised or neglected, as threatening no danger to religion and

the work of reformation amongst us : besides sundry others who are infected with errors in several sorts, there being not a few of those monstrously erring souls, commonly called Quakers, who strike at the root of the Christian religion, by denying the scriptures to be the word of God, and setting up, and holding forth their own doating fancies, and foolish imaginations, under the name of the light within them, as the infallible dictates of the Spirit of truth ; and by denying the in-being of sin, and asserting the perfection of the new creature in the regenerated, even to such a measure of righteousness and holiness, as is equal with that of our blessed Saviour, Jesus Christ himself ; and by denying of the resurrection of the body from the dead, and maintaining many other errors, which though abominable and vile in themselves, yet are boldly vented and actively spread by these persons ; and which is more lamentable, sad experience proveth in both nations, that not a few, and those not of the most ignorant and seemingly profane, are apt to receive, and be carried away with these strange delusions. And therefore should we not be so slothful and secure, as to think that religion is not in hazard by the infection already begun amongst us. The apostle telleth us, "that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump," (1 Cor. v. 6). And if the church of Corinth was in hazard by one ineestuous person, sinning against the light of nature, shall we not judge ourselves to be in hazard by some hundreds, the leaven of whose errors is not so sour to the natural man's taste ?

As the infection of the plague of pestilence hath in a little time derived itself into many, and at last brought forth the ruin of great and populous cities and societies, so hath the gangrene of error often spread itself from one or a few members of particular visible churches unto the body of visible professors therein, that from the sole of the foot unto the top of the head, there has been little or no soundness, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores. The Arian heresy, which was one of the most dangerous and dreadful that ever troubled the Christian church, had its

beginning from one presbyter in the church of Alexandria in Egypt, and yet did run so fast and so far, that in a few years it did over-spread a great part of the Christian world, which made Jerome to say, that the world did groan and wonder at itself that it was become Arian. We shall generally find, that the greatest and most prevailing heresies, have had their rise and original from very small beginnings, and that their authors and abettors have been at first but very few and inconsiderable. If we will not believe our ears, and that which our fathers have told us, yet let us believe our eyes, and that which experience hath taught us. How few and inconsiderable were the sectaries in these nations some eighteen or twenty years ago? And how numerous are they at this day? The Quakers (besides many others of several sorts) do boast themselves to be for number sundry ten thousands. And yet I do believe, that within these sixteen years, or little more, scarce were ten single persons of that judgment heard of in any place of these nations; and their increasing in so short a time to so great a number, may convincingly teach us what we may and ought to fear,—the growth and increase of sectaries in Scotland, albeit their number for the present be not great. And though happily there be not, in every respect, such an aptitude in the people in this nation to receive errors, nor such parts and abilities for spreading of them, as in sundry of the English, and that we have also the advantage of church-discipline for curbing of them, yet should we not upon such apprehensions as these, be secure. Errors have got no small footing amongst us already; and if the infection could enter while the body is more entire and sound, how much more is it like to spread when sundry of the members are corrupted. If we shall take a view of the many great advantages that the spirit of error and delusion hath at this time, for strengthening and enlarging itself in this land, a man that hath but half an eye may see that religion is imminently in hazard thereby. Therefore I shall now proceed to speak somewhat unto these.

CONSIDERATION THIRD.—*From the toleration and protection that is pleaded for, and allowed to many gross errors and heresies.*

That the civil magistrate is appointed of God to take care, not only of these things that do belong unto righteousness, and concern the civil peace, and natural life of man, but also of the things that concern religion, and do respect the glory of God, and the good of souls; and that, in subordination to these ends, such outward impediments and obstructions as do hinder the same, ought by him to be removed out of the way, and not to be tolerated in a Christian commonwealth, is a truth so clearly set down in the Scriptures, and so fully confirmed in the writings of divines, and so plainly and solemnly engaged unto in the Solemn League and Covenant, that it were needless for me to insist upon the proof thereof. Neither is this my purpose. If any do desire to furnish themselves with scripture and reason in these things, they will find somewhat for their help in the former testimony, and in the warning and testimony of the reverend presbytery of Edinburgh, lately emitted against that sinful and unseasonable petition of some of our unhappy countrymen to the Parliament of England. That which we have to lament is, that notwithstanding the clear light of the Scriptures, and that reason both divine and human do strongly plead the contrary, and that these nations are solemnly engaged by the public vows of God upon them, without respect of persons, to endeavour the extirpation of popery, prelacy, superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found contrary to sound doctrine, and to the power of godliness; yet a very vast toleration is not only pleaded for, and promoted by many, but also framed into a law, by which protection and encouragement is allowed unto many gross errors and heresies, that do not only deny and destroy many of the beautiful superstructures, but do also strike at not a few of the corner-stones and chief foundations of Christian religion; which

doth minister singular advantage to the spirit of delusion, for strengthening and spreading of itself, unto the corrupting of the truth of God, and subverting of souls. The corrupt nature of man is of itself most fertile of vain imaginations, and most prone to carnal liberty, and to transgress the bounds, and remove the landmarks that are set unto it of God ; so that even when curbed and hemmed in with the rail of his law, and with the utmost extent of the care and diligence, and faithfulness, and zeal, both of spiritual and civil rulers, it can hardly be kept from debording into many gross extravagancies in the things of God, and from turning into its course, as the horse rusheth into the battle. What then can be expected, when not only the yoke is taken off its jaws, but that it is also fostered upon the breasts, and dandled upon the knees of protection, and countenance, and encouragement, and suffered to grow up under the warm shadow of civil authority, but that the fountains of the great deep shall be opened up, and overflow the face of the whole land ? When Satan is loosed out of his prison, shall he not deceive the nations ? and when the serpent's bands are taken off, shall he not cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he may cause her to be carried away of the flood ?

Let us but a little consider what have been the fruits of such toleration in these churches and states where it hath got footing. I shall not go so far back as to the first ages of the world, in which men being left to themselves in the things of "professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts and creeping things. Neither shall I speak of the condition of religion in some Protestant States beyond sea, in which toleration is allowed ; but I desire it to be considered, 1. How it fared with the church of Judah, in these periods of time, when toleration got any footing therein. I shall not now stand to debate, whether it was at any time established in Judah by a law ; but it is clear

enough, that when any of the kings of Judah, whether through negligence or want of integrity, or upon carnal and politic considerations, did not restrain, but tolerate false prophets, and idolaters, and corrupters of the worship of God, and perverters of his truth, that idolatry, and the leprosy of manifold errors and corruptions, did quickly spread themselves over the face of that church and nation; that if the Lord had not been graciously pleased to raise up some good kings, who in the zeal of God, and conscience of their duty, did employ their power for destroying of idolatry and false worship, and for making the people "to serve the Lord God of their fathers, according to the law, and the testimony," it had fared no better with them, than it did with the church of Israel, or of the ten tribes, who came by their sinful neglect of the things of God, and tolerating and protecting of false worship, in a few generations, to lose the substantials of religion, and the very face of a church, and of a state too. What sad instances were of these things in the days of Solomon, Rehoboam, Abijah, Jehoram, Ahaziah, Joash, Amaziah, Ahaz, Manasseh, Ammon, Jehoiakim, &c. 2. When about the time of the incarnation of our blessed Lord, and his being on the earth, sundry sects were tolerated in the church of the Jews, did they not come at last to be all overgrown with nettles and thorns, and to lose the being and face of a church? It is worthy of observation that the men of that time, who were zealous patrons of toleration, were in the just judgment of God given up to themselves, to be zealous opposers of the gospel, and to crucify the Lord of glory. 3. It should be considered what hath already been the sad and dreadful effects of this toleration in these nations. Is not the glory of God trodden under foot, the precious truths of the gospel corrupted and perverted, the ordinances of Jesus Christ contemned and cried down, the government and discipline of the kirk in a great measure overthrown, the worship of God despised and profaned, the Lord's day disregarded and casten loose, the power of godliness eaten out, and the whole

work of reformation obstructed, and in many things overturned, many souls subverted, popery, libertinism, superstition, heresy, schism, atheism, profaneness, and many things contrary to sound doctrine increased? And if there be such a growth of so dreadful evils in so few years, and whilst that generation is yet living whom God brought back from the borders of Babylon, (to which we were threatened to be carried captive under the corruptions and tyranny of the prelates;) and who have seen the wonderful works of the Lord in that great deliverance; and have lifted up our hands to heaven, to swear by him that liveth and reigneth for evermore, that we would endeavour the extirpation of these things; what is to be expected if this toleration shall continue, and be transmitted to our posterity, but darkness instead of divination, and that darkness shall cover the land, and gross darkness the people? 4. Let us suppose that such a toleration were granted unto men, in the things that relate unto the duties of righteousness, that are commanded in the second table of the law, to wit, that they might without controlment of the civil authority, and with assurance of protection from the same, walk in these things, according to the dictates of their own spirits, and imaginations and inclinations of their own hearts; were it possible that there could be long peace to him that goes out, or to him that cometh in; or that goods, or good name, or chastity, or life, could be long preserved? Would not the whole land, in a very short time, be filled with rapine, and oppression, and violence, with thefts, and robberies, and slanders, with fornications, adulteries, and incests, with blood and murder, and every sort of abominations? And is there not in the heart of man as great, if not greater, pravity, in order to the duties of the first table, as to these of the second table? nature's light, in our corrupt state, being more eclipsed and depraved in the one than in the other. Can we then expect any better fruit of this toleration, in order to the things of God, and that do concern religion, that it would produce in reference to the things of men, and that do

concern righteousness ? Upon this account it is, that as God hath revealed, in his word, the rule both of religion and righteousness, according to which he hath commanded us to walk in his matters, and in the matters of men, and not according to the imaginations of our own hearts, doing what seemeth good unto us in our own eyes either in the one or in the other ; so hath he appointed civil governments and magistrates amongst the children of men, that they might be keepers of both tables of his law, and that by keeping of both, they might preserve both religion and righteousness, which do otherwise (without a mighty hand of more than ordinary providence) soon go to ruin when rulers are not a terror to evil works that are done against both. 5. As toleration doth bring forth the sad fruits already mentioned ; so do the mother and daughter, both of them, provoke the Lord to give up men to vile affections, and to give them over to a reprobate mind, to do things not convenient, as appeareth from the last part of the first chapter of the epistle to the Romans ; and so bringeth at last the ruin both of religion and righteousness, and destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. All which, with many other obvious considerations that would be tedious to insist upon, may make it evident to such as will impartially and without prejudice weigh the same in the balance of the Lord's sanctuary, and of reason and experience, that as the spirit of error and delusion hath singular advantage, so religion is in imminent hazard thereby.

CONSIDERATION FOURTH.—*From the ignorance, unfruitfulness, instability, looseness and profanity that do abound in the land at this time.*

DANGERS and diseases, whether natural, or moral, or spiritual, are more or less to be feared, according to the weakness or strength, the disposition or indisposition of the object about which they are conversant to resist or receive

the same. As weak and ill-complexioned bodies are readily obnoxious to sickness, and do soon receive infection; and unwise and unvigilant states are easily deceived, and soon broken, and put into confusion; so ignorant, or unstable, or carnal, or profane souls, do easily become a prey to temptations, whether in the matter of their profession, or of their conversation; their ignorance, and want of watchfulness, rendering them blind as to the discovering of the snare; and their want of spiritual life and strength rendering them impotent and indisposed, as to the avoiding and resisting of it; and their instability and looseness, inclining and disposing them to tamper and dally with it. By which it cometh to pass, that they are easily and often entangled, especially in a time of abounding temptations; yea, it is righteous with the Lord because they do not like to retain him in their knowledge, to give them up to a mind void of judgment, and because they receive not the love of the truth, to send them strong delusion, to believe a lie. Hence it was, that the world in older times, both before and after the flood, came to be drowned in gross superstition and abominable idolatry, and that a great part of the Christian church in latter ages came to be drowned in Mahometanism and popery. Now, if we shall look through the breadth of our land, may we not find that there are multitudes of ignorant souls, who do scarce know the first and most common principles of Christian religion, much less have they their senses exercised in the knowledge of the truth, and of the holy scriptures, which are the ground thereof? And how many do sit down satisfied with a very small measure of knowledge, taking many precious and necessary truths upon mere tradition from their ancestors and teachers, without searching the scriptures whether these things be so, that they may attain in themselves a warrantable and well-grounded persuasion thereof? By which it cometh to pass, that sundry such, meeting with deceivers, come to be soon shaken in their minds. Be there not also many simple and unstable souls, who are as reeds shaken with the wind, and apt to

be driven to and fro with every wind of doctrine? And be there not many lukewarm and indifferent, and of a carnally politic spirit, who care for none of these things? Be there not many loose and profane, all which are apt to cast off the profession of the truth, and to be easily seduced and drawn away into error? Because, though haply many such do not much regard either truth or error, yet when error is like to prevail, and come into reputation, and the owning thereof to be attended with eärnal or civil advantages, they can easily be induced to shape their garments, and wear their clothes, according to the fashion of the time. Yea, their carnal mind, which is enmity to God, is also enmity to his truth, and doth dispose them to cast off the yoke thereof, which they are easily persuaded to do, when there is nothing to hinder it but naked respect to the truth itself. Every man in some sense naturally is a heretic; having the seeds of error in his soul, and an aptitude and inclination to bring forth these bitter grapes of wormwood and of gall; and the more that he liveth in formality, and hypocrisy, and looseness, these seeds do in the common body of sin that is in him receive the more increase and strength, and become the more apt to bring forth their own native fruit. There is also, no doubt, a great nearness between errors of judgment and looseness of conversation, and an easy passage from the one to the other. A heretic is easily made vicious and profane, and a vicious and profane man is easily made a heretic; a great part of the Christian world first turned formal and carnal, then Arian and Nestorian, &c. and in the end Mahometan. Do we not see that looseness and profanity in the conversation of sundry doth easily usher in popery in their profession? But much more swiftly do such men by swarms decline from the truth, and embrace errors, when to their natural inclination and corrupt disposition, temporary advantages or disadvantages, the countenance or disrespect, the command or threatening of civil authority, cometh to be superadded? Hence it is, that the bulk of sundry people and nations have, after their receiving and

professing of the truth, sometimes suddenly shaken it off again, and turned aside into errors, whereof we have many instances both in sacred and in church story. Therefore, albeit the truth is for the present professed in purity by the inhabitants of this land, yet there being amongst the body of the people such a multitude of ignorant, lukewarm, unstable, loose souls, who have lived and grown up in these sins for many years together under the light of the gospel, as they may be easily made a prey to the temptations unto error and delusion that do already abound amongst us; so there is just cause to fear, that if the Lord shall, for the further punishment of our provocations, give us up into the hand of a popish or heretical power, who shall join their profession by a law, that many such would soon turn popish or heretical. And whether this may not be our lot to be exercised with such a trial, I leave it to wise men to judge.

CONSIDERATION FIFTH.—*From the great decay of a true public spirit, and of diligence, and zeal, and watchfulness in the things of God; from the great increase of a spirit of sloth, and neutrality, and security amongst us.*

THOUGH in the things of God it be eminently true, that “except the Lord build the house, the builder buildeth in vain; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman watcheth in vain;” yet doth he call upon and command his people to be zealous for his house, and to be faithful and watchful in the things that relate thereunto; the blessing is his, and the duty is ours: and as it is a token for good when his people are cordial and active for his interests, so it is a prognostic of ruin and decay when they become neutral and indifferent, and deal with a slack hand, and wax secure in the midst of dangers. In speaking to this, it is not my purpose to charge backsliding upon any party or person in the land, upon the account of public differences. I think that without reflecting upon these, or giving offence to any that are concerned therein, upon one hand or another, that taking

the body of this church complexly, it may be truly said that there is a great decay of a true public spirit, and of former integrity, and diligence, and zeal, and watchfulness for the things of God amongst us ; and that no party is so insensible of their own guilt, or so tenacious of their own innocence, that they will deny this. I do not speak as to appearing or acting in civil capacities, the Lord having broken civil government to pieces, and casten by our governors as broken vessels, whereof he maketh no use for the defence and preservation of religion : but what a decay is upon us, as to many of those things that do beseeem us as Christians, especially in such an hour of temptation, and when the public cause of God, and all the precious interests of Jesus Christ and of his kingdom, are in so imminent hazard ! It is true that every man hath his gifts and station assigned him of God, according to the measure and bounds of which, without overreaching (a thing too common in these evil days) he is to demean himself. But it is also true, that all of us being members of the body of Christ, and having an interest in the things that concern his kingdom, we ought to be so far of public spirits, as not only cordially to wish well unto, and pray for the body and common interests thereof, but also, according to the talents we have received of him, and in our station, and as we are thereunto called of God, to put forth ourselves cheerfully and actively for the good of the same, whether by doing or suffering. The public cause and work of God was wont to be precious and dear unto us ; and the time was, when no pains, nor expense, nor hazard, was declined for preserving or promoting thereof. We were wont to stir up ourselves, and to stir up one another, and to wrestle with God in prayer and supplication together and apart, for setting up of Jerusalem and making her a praise in the earth. The time was, when upon the appearing of any danger to religion, though happily but afar off, and far inferior to many dangers that are now within our bowels, seasonable and clear warning was given thereof by the body of the watchmen in the land, and

many private Christians made it their work to deal seriously with God in the secret watches of the night, for preventing of the same; and many were found of every rank and condition throughout the land, who did readily put forth themselves in their stations and callings, to prevent future and remove present prejudices to religion. The time was, when the things of God were more minded and sought than our own things, his matters were wont to have the preference in all public councils and transactions amongst us, and as public motions and overtures did tend to the promoting or prejudicing of the things of God, so they were wont to be entertained or rejected in public meetings. Civil interests were wont to be carried on in subordination to those that are spiritual; our own safety and security were wont to be minded in subordination to the safety and security of religion, and of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. But now such a public, and tender, and vigilant spirit is in a great measure gone from amongst us, and instead thereof, neutrality, and indifference, and carnal security, possess many as to what concerneth religion and the kingdom of Jesus Christ; and to many it seemeth to be but of small concernment, whether the Lord's matters sink or swim. Many seek their own things, and study to secure themselves, and their own matters, but few seek the things of Jesus Christ, or care for the preserving or the securing of his interest. Is it not for a lamentation that in the public meetings which have been kept in the several shires of this nation, these eight or nine years past, there hath been little or no care, or resentment of religion, or of the work of God; but these things have been in a great measure forgotten or laid aside, as if we were not a people devoted to the Lord; or, as if religion were nothing of our concernment; or, as if all that care did belong to ministers only? To these it is indeed in a special way incumbent to take care thereof; and would to God, that all of us who bear that name, did endeavour to be faithful and vigilant in this hour of temptation. There is no doubt, but we, even we also, have our own

fainting and failings, as to many things that are called for in such a day, and that our breaches have both weakened ourselves and blunted and stumbled others: but surely neither all the fault, nor all the duty is ours only. As the several ranks and estates of the land were honoured of God to be eminently instrumental, both in the beginning and progress of the work of reformation, for sundry years together, so there is no question, but it is still incumbent to them in duty, in their several stations and callings, according to the oath of God in the covenant, really, constantly, and sincerely, all the days of their life, to endeavour the preservation of the reformed religion in the church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, and not to give themselves over to indifference and neutrality thereanent, or to give themselves to be possessed with a spirit of carnal security and negligence in reference thereto. I do not doubt, but the conscience and care of their duty, is upon the hearts of some of all ranks in the land; but who can deny that a spirit of security and neutrality had prevailed upon many? Flesh and blood, and carnal wisdom, will not want excuses in these matters; but if we shall enter into the sanctuary of the Lord, and weigh it in his balance, it cannot be excused, that the covenant and cause of God, that religion and the interests of Jesus Christ, should be so much forgotten and laid aside, and that there should be so small resentment of the injuries that are done thereunto; and that no security nor remedy against the encroachments that are made thereupon, and the dangers that threaten the same, should be so much as propounded or desired. How far is this from that which we were once at? And is there not cause to fear, that because of this lukewarmness, God shall spew us out of his mouth, as he threateneth to do unto the church of Laodicea, because she was neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm in the matters of God? (Rev. iii. 16).

CONSIDERATION SIXTH.—*From the Divisions that are amongst us.*

WHILST I am speaking of those dangers that are intestine, and do minister advantage to the spirit of error and delusion, I cannot overpass our divisions, that being a danger that is none of the smallest. It is the assertion of our blessed Lord Jesus, which reason and experience verify, that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. And how sad are these divisions which are in Scotland at this day ! I shall not insist on these that do concern civil government, which yet, wherever they are, have no small influence upon things religious ; men being oftentimes apt to follow that way, even in the things of God, that seemeth most to contribute for setting up or settling these civil governments and governors, which their hearts did most affect, and their endeavours thereanent, together with the reciprocal endeavours of these governors themselves having oftentimes no small tendency unto the altering or changing somewhat in religion. But waving these things, is there not difference and division amongst us, even in order to things religious ? viz. the discipline and government of the church, and the covenant, and a great part of the late work of reformation, &c. It is true, there hath been external subjection in these things by the body of the inhabitants of this land ; but it were to shut our eyes, and to befool ourselves in the clear day, to think that all those who did externally subject themselves thereunto, before the year 1650, do now approve thereof, the practices and professions of many witnessing the contrary ; some being openly fallen off to Independency, some to Anabaptism, some to Quakerism, and many being fraught with the old malignant enmity against the covenant and the work of reformation, and the discipline and the government of the church, speaking evil of, and reproaching these things at their pleasure, and making it manifest, that they would be glad of any means and opportunity to bear down and overturn the same. And how sad are

these divisions that are amongst us of the ministry? How are the watchmen, who ought to see with one eye, and to speak with one tongue, and to bear with one shoulder, divided amongst themselves? It is not my purpose at present to discover the fountain of this evil, or to impute the guilt thereof to one rather than to another. Neither do I mean from the bad consequences of our divisions, to debate innocence and truth unto silence, or to persuade to an union upon any terms, though with the increase of our sin against God, and with the greater prejudice of his work, and with more offence to the consciences of those that are truly tender and godly; but simply to hold forth, that the division doth in many respects threaten danger to religion, and the ordinances of Jesus Christ amongst us, that so the true causes and right cure thereof may be searched into and studied.

1. It giveth advantage to adversaries to cast slanders and imputations upon our church, and the government thereof, as having (if they may be believed) little or nothing of that unity, and peace, and love, that becometh the true church and pastors of Jesus Christ. 2. It doth lay a stumbling-block in the way, not only of ignorant, and carnal, and profane men, to make them cast at religion and reformation, but also of some less knowing, and weak amongst the godly, who are brought to doubt which way to follow, whilst they see some learned and godly ministers pleading for one thing, and others also learned and godly pleading for another. 3. It doth much harden and confirm such of that party in the land, who formerly opposed the work of reformation, and do retain their enmity thereto, that it is not a work that hath been of God, as having no consistence, nor concord with itself, but like to pull down and destroy itself by the divisions that are amongst the chief instruments thereof. 4. It doth divert the judicatories of the kirk, and the members thereof, from employing themselves against the common adversaries, and promoting the exercises and power of godliness. 5. It maketh discipline and church censures sundry times to be disregarded, as not proceeding

from presbyteries and synods jointly, but oftentimes in a divided way. 6. It breedeth sundry inconveniencies in the planting of churches, sometimes obstructing the plantation for sundry years together, sometimes planting them with men not satisfyingly qualified, sometimes making two differing plantations in one congregation, by which both the ministers and the people come to be divided, or the dissatisfied party, if they cannot win at a minister, to be casten loose, and left without a ministry, and the benefit of the public ordinances. 7. The door is thereby shut sundry times, against sundry able and godly expectants, who are thereby kept from entering into the ministry. 8. Advantage is thereby given to disaffected people in some congregations, to separate and withdraw from their own lawful pastors, and either to cast themselves loose of the ordinances, or else to call and set up others in an inorderly way. 9. It doth retard and obstruct the purging of the church from insufficient and scandalous ministers and elders, who do shelter themselves, and are taken but too little notice of, under these differences and divisions. 10. It doth occasion men in the heat of their debates anent these differences, to run too far upon the asserting and venting of things for the defence of their own opinions and judgments, that may prove seeds and inlets to tenets and evils that are of greater and more dangerous consequence. 11. It doth in no small measure alienate the minds, and estrange the hearts and affections of good men one from another, and weaken them in their prayers before God one for another, and in that confidence and cordialness that they should have in their joint carrying on of common and uncontroverted duties ; all which, as they are present prejudices to religion and the work of God ; so, being continued, are like to prove more and more dangerous and destructive thereunto.

CONSIDERATION SEVENTH.—*From the attempts and assaults that are made by many upon the ordinances of Jesus Christ.*

As this inferior world, without the light of the sun, would be but a mass of darkness and confusion, so would the Church militant without ordinances ; and as food is necessary for preserving of the life of the body, so hath God appointed, that in our pilgrim condition here below, the soul's life should depend upon the use of his ordinances. What is religion, but a conscientious worshipping of God, after the manner, and in the use of the ordinances prescribed by himself? And yet I do not know if, in any generation, the ordinances of God have been more directly struck at, than they are by many in these nations at this day. I shall pass that fanatic generation of Familists, that cry down all worship and ordinances, as things below a saint's condition, sundry of which, as wandering stars, be travelling up and down these lands. But let us a little consider what attempts and assaults are made by many against the word of God, and the preaching thereof, against the sacraments, against the Lord's day, against the ministry, and against the discipline and government of the Church ; which things are the very pillars of religion, that being destroyed, religion cannot but evanish and turn into nothing. As to the holy word of God contained in the Scriptures of truth, there be not only sundry Jesuits and seminary priests lurking in sundry places of the land, who cry down the perfection and authority of the Scriptures, and the reading thereof in our vulgar tongue, and the Bibles which are in people's hands, as false, and corrupt, and heretical translations, and do commend unto them the authority of Rome and her traditions for the ground of salvation, and the old Latin version for the authentic text of the scripture, and the Bible of Douay for the best and purest English version, and all our public worship as corrupt ; but we have also the whole tribe of the Quakers concurring and conspiring to the utmost of

their power to cry down the divinity and authority of the written word of God, and to persuade such as will believe them, that the scriptures have no authority over men's consciences ; and that no command in scripture that was given to others, doth bind us, save what we have an impulse upon our own spirits for ; and that every man in the world hath a light within him, sufficient to guide him unto salvation, without the help of any outward light or discovery ; and that the dictates of this inward light are the infallible dictates of the Spirit of God, which every one is bound to hearken unto.

This, as it is one of the most impudent, so it is one of the most compendious ways that ever was taken by Satan, for striking at the root of Christian religion, and banishing of it out of the world. If the Scriptures be not the word of God, what have we for the ground of our faith, and rule of our duty ? The light that is within us, when not derived from, and founded upon, and agreeable unto the law and the testimony, is but darkness, and leadeth us unto as many bye-paths of division and destruction, as our corrupt fancy can devise, or the father of lies suggest unto us. Neither are these men any greater friends to the sacraments instituted and appointed by Jesus Christ under the gospel : they cry down baptism with water, and the Lord's Supper, as being but types and shadows, ceasing upon the appearance of Christ within them. The Anabaptists also, though they do not simply deny nor oppugn the ordinance of baptism, yet by denying and oppugning the baptism of infants born within the visible Church, they do not only at one dash, unbaptize, and unchurch all the thousands of our Israel, but do also leave our children and posterity, in regard of any covenant privilege or seal, in little or no better condition than those of infidels or pagans. And how prevailing an opinion and party this is in these nations at this day, is manifest enough. The Lord's day, though a moral and divine institution, and generally acknowledged in the Churches of Christ, to be the key of religion, and that or-

dinance which keepeth all the rest in life and being, by separating us one day of every week from the world and worldly business, to be solemnly set apart and exercised in religious duties, chiefly those that concern the public worship of God, in the public assemblies of his people ; yet is by many of the sectaries of this time also cried down, and the keeping thereof slighted and opposed ; which being added to that natural averseness and enmity that is in the hearts of all carnal and profane men, (the number of which in all quarters of our land is not small) unto the giving or keeping a day unto the Lord, threatens no small danger unto this most necessary and divine institution, and to the public worship of God. What is more like to take with worldly-minded men, and wanton persons, and libertines, than this, that all days are alike, and that the Lord's day is but a device of man, and a yoke, and a bondage upon the necks of the disciples, from which they ought to deliver themselves ? this being one of the things which carnal hearts do most desire and hunt after. When carnal liberty getteth conscience upon its side, and carnal licentious practices get under the shadow of religious opinions, they do then wax bold as lions, and tear in pieces the precious truths and commandments of God that stand in their way. And this is like to prove in the matter of the Lord's day. And not only are ministers had in derision and contempt, and railed upon, and reviled as deceivers, thieves, robbers, Baal's priests, conjurers, antichrists, witches, devils, Simon's serpents, bloody Herodians, scarlet-coloured beasts, Babylon's merchants, wolves, dogs, swine, sodomites, murderers, ministers of darkness, cursed speakers, Cain's stock, vagabonds, who walk in the way of Cain, Balaam, and Core, and what not that a malicious heart can invent, and a violent tongue utter ;—but the ordinance of the ministry itself is also cried down as altogether needless, and burdensome to the Lord's people under the gospel, who (if some of these men may be believed) have no need of any outward teaching, by reading or hearing the Scriptures opened or applied,

that light within them being sufficient to teach them in the knowledge of the will of God, as to all these things that concern their duty and salvation ; or as others of these men will have it, all of them are warranted to be teachers themselves, and that a peculiar office of a teaching or preaching ministry, is no ordinance of Christ ; or if any such be, that they are not to be by any immediate call from man, but by an immediate call from God, and the peculiar instinct of the Holy Ghost.

I may add these things,—the general disrespect and disesteem that prevail on the hearts, and appear in the carriage of disaffected and profane men to the ministry ; together with a strong inclination that is in many to have ministers according to their own hearts, who will speak smooth things unto them, and heal their hurt slightly ; and that the maintenance of entrance to the ministry, to which there was wont to be free and legal access by virtue of their ordination, is now seized upon by the civil power, who do not allow it to any, but upon condition of their declaring their resolution to live peaceably under the present government. And for the discipline and government of the church, not only are the civil laws that concern the upholding thereof and giving obedience thereunto repealed, and liberty allowed to all those who are pleased to speak or write against it, or withdraw their subjection therefrom ; but other sorts also of kirk discipline and government that are destructive thereunto are set up and promoted, and protected and countenanced amongst us. These things being so, is it not past all question, that the pillars of religion, which is wisdom's house, are in hazard to be overthrown by the malicious and subtle devices of Satan ? And that it is high time for us to awake, and see our danger, lest, ere we be aware, we be spoiled of the precious treasure of the gospel, and blessed ordinances of Jesus Christ, by which we live, and in which is the life of our souls ?

DANGER EIGHTH.—*From the growth and increase of Popery in the land.*

THAT the pope and his party hath these many years past had a special eye upon Britain, and upon this nation as a part thereof, for reducing the same into the obedience of the see of Rome, is better known than that I need to insist upon the proof of it; and therefore hath he always had his emissaries the Jesuits and seminary priests, travelling up and down in this island, under diverse masks, for perverting of souls, and setting plots and conspiracies on foot for compassing the design. How much their hopes were heightened, and in what a fair way they were for bringing it about before the year 1638, is fresh in remembrance. And although these hopes were in a great measure blasted by the reformation then begun in Scotland, and prosperously carried on in both nations for sundry years thereafter; yet are they now again revived under our present distempers and confusions, which (especially by reason of the vast toleration of errors and heresies, of which I have already spoken) do minister unto papists great and singular advantages for promoting and compassing their design. Not only is liberty afforded them to vent most part of the popish doctrine, (which keeping of the pope's supremaey, and the popish hierarchy, with some other things of that kind, they may do without hazard) but these penal statutes and laws, which concern men's going to church, and attending the word and sacraments, &c., being taken away, they have liberty to withdraw themselves from the ordinances, and means of conviction and instruction, and may keep their own private meetings with their ghostly fathers at home, without regard to the censures of the church. And, in the meanwhile, Jesuits and seminary priests come not a few of them into the country, and do import, or cause to be imported, numbers of popish pamphlets, which are industriously spread, and put into the hands of such as they perceive in any measure inclinable to their way, or by reason of their ma-

lignant disposition, to be in dislike with the covenant, or the government and discipline of the church, or any part of the work of reformation, or to be ignorant or loose in their conversation. Neither are sundry of them wanting, in the meanwhile, to the utmost of their power, by subtle and fair speeches, to draw away such from the purity of their profession, and to instil into them the love of the way of the Church of Rome, as that which was the religion of our forefathers. Not a few papists also, who had formerly left the country because of the strictness of the laws, do now return home again, and others who staid at home and did profess subjection and conformity to the church, do now withdraw, and openly avow themselves to be papists. Neither is their advantage small by the remnant of the malignant and prelatical party that is yet amongst us. These also having a great enmity against the covenant and government of the church, and the work of reformation ; and there being in sundry things a great sympathy between these parties, and a great relationship in their principles and ways, and a deal of readiness to correspond together, and to countenance one another,—by these means and such as these it comes to pass, that popery grows and spreads in several places of the land from year to year. To which if we shall add, the correspondence that papists have with, and the encouragements they have from their friends abroad, together with the design (which hath been long a-hatching) of the popish leaguers beyond sea, their invading of Britain as the strongest bulwark of the Protestant cause, that it being brought under, they may the more easily make a prey of the rest of the Protestant states and churches ; and that this invasion is like to be stated upon such a quarrel, and carried on under such a pretext, as will engage the affection and assistance of some, and blunt the opposition of others,—do not all these things put together heighten the danger of the true Protestant religion in Scotland ?

DANGER NINTH.—*From our guiltiness in many of these things, for which the Lord threateneth to depart, and remove his candlestick.*

I HAVE spoken of sundry sins that do abound amongst us, as they do weaken the soul in resisting of temptations, and in following of those duties that are necessary for preserving of religion in its purity and power, and as inlets to dispose unto things that are contrary and destructive thereunto. I shall now resume some of these sins, and add thereunto some others whereof we are in a great measure guilty, for which the Lord threateneth to depart, and remove his candlestick.

The first I name is, that gross ignorance of the gospel, and of the necessary truths of God, that possesseth multitudes of our land in this clear gospel day, and under the plenty of the means of knowledge. Is not this the condemnation of many, that light is come in amongst us, and that they love darkness rather than light? The ignorance of many is affected and perverse, and therefore without excuse. Is there not cause to fear that dreadful word, "It is a people of no understanding; therefore he that made them will have no mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favour?" (Isa. xxii. 11). And that of another of the prophets, "Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my soul depart from thee," (Jer. vi. 8).

The second is, the abounding and prevailing formality that is amongst us, or a form of godliness without the power thereof. Because of this, the Lord threatens to send delusion, strong delusion, upon a people, that they may believe a lie, (2 Thess. ii. 10–12), yea, to choose their delusions, and bring their fears upon them, (Isa. lxvi. 3, 4). And do not such delusions seem to be the proper plague of these nations at this time, chosen and sent of God for punishing our formality? Hath there been at any time more strong delusion, whether we look unto the multiplicity and monstrosity of the errors which are hatched and vented, or the multitude of persons

that have come quickly to be infected therewith? This is doubtless a piece of the hour and power of darkness, wherein Satan is loosed out of his prison, and is gone forth to deceive these nations. And when delusions are chosen and sent of God, and the Holy One doth in his spotless and righteous providence, for punishing the sins of men, say to the lying spirit who offers himself to be the minister of enticing of souls, "Go forth, and thou shalt prevail," have not all of us reason to tremble and fear? "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall," (1 Cor. x. 12).

The third is, barrenness and unfruitfulness under the gospel; for which the Lord threatens to take away the hedge of his vineyard, and it shall be eaten up; to break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down; to lay it waste, and it shall not be pruned or digged, (Isa. v. 6, 7). A charge is given by the Master of the vineyard, to cut down the fig-tree that yielded no fruit for three years, (Luke xiii. 7); and the Apostle telleth us, that the earth that drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth nothing but thorns and thistles, is rejected and near unto cursing, (Heb. vi. 8). And is not this in an eminent measure the sin of our land, that notwithstanding the Lord doth plentifully water us with the dew of heaven, and with the sweet rain of the gospel, day by day, yet are we, as to most of us, an empty vine, that bringeth forth fruit unto ourselves, but not unto God?

The fourth is, slighting and loathing, and wearying of the precious things of God, and the blessed opportunities thereof, and preferring our own carnal and worldly advantages thereunto; for which the Lord threatens that he will cause the sun go down at noon-day, and that he will darken the earth in the clear day, and that he will send a famine of hearing the words of the Lord, and that his people shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it, (Amos viii. 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12). And this sin also reigneth amongst us. How many loath

the ordinances, and slight the opportunities thereof? How many weary of the Lord's day, and halve it between God and the world? How is our blessed Lord Jesus, and the inestimable treasure of the gospel, valued by many at a very low rate? many times less than thirty pieces of silver, that he may justly take up that sad complaint, "A goodly price that I was prized at of them," (Zeeh. xi. 13), and break his statutes and begone.

The fifth is, refusing to hearken unto God; for which "my God," says the prophet Hosea (ix. 17), "will east them away." Are we not a rebellious and gainsaying people, who neither fear the threatenings of God to repent, nor entertain his promises to believe, nor regard his commandments to obey? And may not the Lord upbraid us as he did those cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not, and bring upon us the judgments and desolation threatened in that place? (Matt. xi. 21-24). May he not because of our unbelief, cut us off, as he did the church of the Jews? (Rom. xi. 20). Doth not their example eall upon us, not to be high-minded but to fear? May he not, because of our disobedienec, and that so many of us do refuse to suffer him to reign over us, pass upon us that sad sentence that is reecorded, (Luke xix. 27).

The sixth is, that which is written as the sin of the prophets, (Jer. vi. 14; Ezek. xiii. 10, 16, 22; xxxiv. 18, 19, 21; Micah iii. 5); for which the Lord threatens that night shall be unto them, and they shall not have a vision, that it shall be dark unto them, that they shall not divine, and that the sun shall go down over them. I do not intend the application of this to any upon the aecount of the public differenee; but without respect to parties or differences, it can hardly be denied that though, blessed be God for it, there be in the land many precious ministers of both judgments, who study to divide the word of God aright, warning the wicked to turn from the evil of his way, and encouraging the godly in the pursuit and practiee of godliness, and speaking a word in season to weary souls; yet

there be not a few who heal the hurt of the daughter of the Lord's people slightly, and do speak peace to those to whom the Lord doth not speak peace; who thrust with the side and the shoulder, and bite with the teeth those who ought to be encouraged and comforted. It is sadly bemoaned by the serious seekers of God, in many places of the land, that the work of some ministers is not to commend themselves to every man's conscience, as in the sight of God, but to handle the word of God deceitfully, in making sad the hearts of the righteous, by turning the edge and application of their doctrine against them, under the notion of hypocrites and sectaries, and such like, and in strengthening the hands of the wicked that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life; by which it cometh to pass, that sundry of the people in sundry congregations, do bless themselves in their hearts, and say, that they shall have peace, though they walk in the imagination of their hearts, to add drunkenness to thirst, and that the few seekers of God that are in these congregations, or in the country about, are looked upon by such as the vilest and most hateful of men, and their way more seared at than that of the drunkard or the common swearer. Because of this, there is cause to fear that the Lord shall accomplish the threatening of the prophet, by sending darkness instead of divination.

The seventh is, dealing treacherously with God in the matter of his covenant, for which the Lord threateneth dreadful desolation (Deut. xxix. 22-25), and in many scriptures besides, which threatenings he hath eminently verified against the Church of the Jews, who because of breach of covenant, were cast out of his sight many hundred years ago, and have continued in that doleful and desolate condition unto this day. And are not we, even we also, those who have been unstedfast, and have dealt falsely in the covenant of God? I shall not descend into particulars, about which there may be difference; but sure I am, that cleaving unto God, and close walking with him, and zeal for the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and against the open ene-

mies and adversaries thereof, and the reforming of ourselves and of our followers, in our several stations and capacities, will be denied by none, to be amongst the great ends, whether of our baptismal covenant, or of our national covenant, or of the Solemn League and Covenant; and that every tender heart amongst us will also acknowledge that most of us have not only come exceedingly short, but most palpably and grossly transgressed in order to all these things, in so far, that the very obligation thereunto, is not only forgotten, but trodden under foot of many;—a sin that is much heightened by the greatness of the Lord's mercies and wonderful works manifested and done in our behalf in the contriving and carrying on of these covenants, and by the openness and solemnity of our way, in engaging of ourselves thereunto. We may say, that because of the oath of the covenant, the land mourneth, and that God hath a great and sore controversy with us for this thing; and that there is just cause to fear, that as he hath begun, so he will continue to pursue the quarrel thereof, until he bring darkness and desolation upon us, unless mercy shall prevent us, by giving us to repent and turn again to himself.

The eighth is, forsaking of our first love, for which the Lord threateneth to remove the candlestick of the church of Ephesus, (Rev. ii. 4); which may also breed us great fear that our candlestick shall be removed, and that, upon these two grounds: first, because we have in a very great measure left our first love, and declined from our former attainments. I shall not compare this generation of our church with the generation of our fathers; I mean those who did shake off the yoke of the Roman Antichrist, and embrace the light of the gospel, from whose zeal we are far degenerated. But let us compare ourselves with ourselves, I mean what we are now, with what we once were, and that but a very few years ago, and see if there be not cause to say, that we have left our first love.

I shall name but a few particulars. First, there was in our love, not long ago, a tender respect to all the precious

truths of God, with a fervent desire and serious endeavour of attaining and possessing them in their purity, which brought forth a deal of holy abhorrence and indignation against every thing that tended unto the leavening or corrupting of the same. What if the toleration that is now amongst us had been but moved in Scotland some ten years ago? Would it have been brooked with so many close mouths, and with so many dry eyes as it is this day? Secondly, there was in our love a wonderful zeal for the privileges of the church, and of Christ's visible kingdom amongst us, that these might not be encroached upon, nor borne down by the powers of the world; but now we can hear and see sad encroachments made by these, and say little or nothing against it, either before God or men. Thirdly, there was in our love a great deal of zeal against that bitter root of malignancy, I mean that, which is so diametrically opposite to godliness, and to the kingdom of Jesus Christ; but now it getteth leave to grow up kindly under our shadow, and many are so favourable to it that they will scarce once name it, or suffer it to be named. Fourthly, there was in our love a holy severity in the exercise of church discipline, for purging of the house of God, especially against corrupt and scandalous church-officers; but that is in a great measure slackened and gone. Fifthly, there was in our love much Christian and cordial respect one to another, which brought forth sweet union and concord, and harmony in the judicatories of the kirk, and amongst the ministers of the house of God; but now we bite and devour one another.

I might also name the abating of our love to the ordinances and to holy duties, and to Christian fellowship and tenderness of conversation. But passing these, I come to the other ground of fear, and that is, that we seem to be much more fallen from our first love at this day than the church of Ephesus was fallen from hers, when God threatened to remove her candlestick. Let us look upon the text, and see what Ephesus then was: "I know thy

works, and thy labour, and thy patience," saith Jesus Christ unto her, "and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted." Do we deserve so great a testimony as this? Or, are we not far short in these things? Where are our works, and where are our labour and patience, and where is our zeal against those that are evil? Are we not a barren and fruitless people? Is not our way the way of the sluggard, and full of murmuring and fretting? Do we not bear with many who are evil? and do we not suffer many to go without trial, who say they are pastors and are not? Do we not decline the cross of Jesus Christ, and refuse to bear and to labour for his name? And do we not either faint or turn aside to crooked ways? And shall we in all these things fall so far short of Ephesus, and of her carriage, even when the removal of her candlestick was threatened, and yet not fear the removal of our candlestick? If we deal impartially with ourselves, by considering all these our provocations, which I have already named, and many more that are but too obvious, and would be tedious to insist upon, we cannot but be affrighted that the Lord shall depart from amongst us; yea he hath in no small measure departed already. And this is that to which I shall speak somewhat in the next place.

DANGER TENTH.—*That the Lord who is our light, and life, and strength, is in no small measure departed from us, and hath smitten us with many plagues of heart.*

THE presence and appearances of God amongst a people, are either such as do concern them simply, as men united together in civil society under civil government, in order to righteousness and peace, or such as concern them as Christian men united in a church-state, under ecclesiastic and spiritual government, in order to truth and holiness. Of

the first sort, are these which are manifested in the common operations and effects of the Spirit, when He giveth unto them the gifts of knowledge, wisdom, fortitude, temperance, justice, courage, and such like, in reference to civil administrations, and blesseth and prospereth them in the exercise thereof: so the Lord was with Cyrus, whose right hand he did hold to subdue nations before him, and to loose the loins of kings, and to open before him the two-leaved gates, &c. (Isa. xlv. 1). Of the other sort, are either these which are manifested in the more peculiar operations and effects of his Spirit (which yet are but common in opposition to saving grace), when he giveth unto his people the gift of prophecy, or ministry, or teaching, or exhortation, or church ruling, and countenanceth them in the exercise thereof, "for perfecting of the saints, and edifying of the body of Christ," (Rom. xii. 6, 7; Eph. iv. 8, 11, 12). Or else these which are manifested in the special operations of his renewing spirit, when he giveth sanctifying and saving grace, and by his continued breathings, and quickening influences thereupon, maketh his people to be more and more renewed in the inward man day by day: so he was with his servant Paul in the midst of all his tribulations and afflictions, (2 Cor. iv. 16). And according to the measure of the appearances or withdrawings of God in these things, so do the matters of his people, whether civil, or ecclesiastic, or spiritual, prosper or decay.

Now, in reference to all these, God is in no small measure departed from amongst us, and hath left us under a cloud of desertion, and smitten us with sundry plagues of heart. As to civil administrations, wisdom, and understanding, and courage, and strength, and success, were taken from us, and the Lord did smite us with blindness, and confusion, and astonishment, and trembling of heart. Wisdom was not to be found with the ancient, nor understanding and counsel with the prudent. He mingled a perverse spirit in the midst of us, that caused us to err in every work. He went not forth with our armies, and

therefore our princes became like harts that find no pasture, and that fly without strength before the pursuer ; and the men of might did not find their hands, but became like unto women that were affrighted, and did fear, because of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of Hosts, which he shook over our land. He made all our strongholds to be like fig-trees, with the first ripe figs which fall into the mouth of the eater, when they are shaken, and the gates of our land to be set wide open to our enemies ; and his hand was against us, until he had taken away from us the mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prudent, and the whole stay of armies, and the staff of our civil government. Neither is his wrath in these things turned away, but his hand is stretched out still. Our nobles are not of ourselves, nor do our governors proceed from the midst of us ; but strangers do bear rule over us, and the home-born sons are broken as the breaking of a potter's vessel that is broken to pieces, so that there is not found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or take water out of the pit.

Neither is the Lord's departure small in reference to our church and church-administrations. He hath sorely cracked, if not broken to pieces, both the staves, "the staff of beauty, and the staff of bands," the unity and authority of pastors, and of church-judicatories : he hath divided us in his anger, and poured his contempt upon us ; and though we have essayed to heal our wound, and to recover our strength, yet have all our essays hitherto, for the most part, been frustrated of the Lord. Do we not come together many times for the worse, and not for the better ? Is there not bruising instead of binding up, and much bitter contention and strife in many of our meetings ? Instead of the sweet fruits of an edifying union and peace, whilst we should draw in the work of the Lord with one shoulder, do not some draw one way, and others another, rendering our endeavours almost useless to the church, comfortless to ourselves, and despicable to others ? Hath not God in his holy and just indignation, mingled somewhat of a perverse spirit in the midst of us, and are we not

full of the fury of the Lord, and of the rebuke of our God? We wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness: we grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes; we stumble at noon-day as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men: we look for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far off from us.

And is not the Lord's hand also upon his ordinances, to restrain and withhold the blessing thereof? In this respect, much is sown, and little brought in: the word of salvation, as to any sensible evidence thereof, is but rarely blessed in the hand of the ministers, unto the converting of souls, and turning men from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God. It is the complaint of faithful ministers, in many places of the land, "that they labour in vain, and spend their strength for nothing;" yea, how doleful and dreadful is the withering and decay that is upon many souls, who lay claim to conversion, and to a real interest in Jesus Christ? The generation of the righteous in the land do bemoan this thing, and complain day by day, "that light is darkness, that life is withered, that strength is abated, that presence is evanished, that tenderness is gone, that influences are withholden, that prayer is restrained and shut out, that faith faileth, that love is grown cold, that hearts are hardened as stones; that there is little or no delight in God, or in his word, or in the fellowship of his people; that corruptions are aloft, and heart plagues do abound; that God hideth his face, and is as a stranger unto his people, and leaveth them to wrestle alone in their duties and difficulties;" so that to deny the withdrawals of God from his people, were to deny what they find and feel, written upon their hearts and upon their way in a continued tract of sad experiences, now for a long time. And yet whilst it is confessedly thus, how little ado is there for his departings, even amongst those who are convinced, and do acknowledge that he is in a great measure gone? Some remembrance there

is of a better condition, whilst we did enjoy his fellowship, and his countenance did shine upon us, and some light to discover our loss and the evils that do attend it, which bring forth a sort of desires to recover our former state. But these,—how faint and feckless are they? and how many of us are, in a manner, content to live without God, and to suffer him to be gone, without taking hold on the skirts of his garments? It may justly be said, “that we do fade as a leaf, and that our iniquities like the wind do take us away;” and that there be few amongst us that call upon his name, or stir up themselves to take hold on him; for “he hath hid his face from us, and doth consume us, because of our iniquities.” If his gracious influences were strong upon our hearts, we would not, we could not, easily brook his departing, nor would we, or could we be satisfied, or hold our peace night and day, until he did return, and revive his work, and renew his strength, and repair the ruins, and build up the breaches of his people; and our sitting almost satisfied and silent under his withdrawals, doth say, that many of us, though “we have a name that we are living, yet we are dead;” and that the spiritual life which remains in others, is ready to die. Which things do say, that our gourd is withering at the root, that religion is wounded at the heart, and smitten in its vitals, in the spiritual powers of the soul; within which, if the Lord breathe not from above, by pouring out of his Spirit from on high, will soon make any fruit or leaves of profession that do remain without, to wither and decay, and leave us like Nebuchadnezzar’s, tree which by the command of the watcher and holy one that came down from heaven, was hewn down, and had its branches cut, and its leaves shaken, and its fruit scattered, and the beasts driven from under it, and the fowls from its branches, and the stump of its roots only left in the earth, bound with a band of iron and of brass, until seven times did pass over it.

SOME CONSIDERATIONS *soberly offered in answer to those who seem to entertain a fixed persuasion, that God will not remove his tabernacle from amongst us.*

THERE be not a few who can hardly be induced to admit or entertain any thoughts, that the Lord meaneth to remove his tabernacle from Scotland, having received and someway fixed in their bosoms, a kind of persuasion to the contrary. I would be loath to discourage the hearts, or weaken the hands of any, who do in a humble and sincere way, and in subordination to the Scripture rule, desire to believe, that the Lord's thoughts towards this poor church and land, are thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give us an expected end of all our troubles and fears, by making mountains plain, and crooked things straight, and bringing forth the head-stone of the work of reformation, causing his people to cry, "grace, grace unto it!" Much less is it my purpose to adventure upon the secrets of God, or determine any thing positively and peremptorily, either as to his continuing or removing of the gospel. But I do believe, that upon sober and serious search, it will be found, that many have taken up, and do entertain these persuasions of God's abiding amongst us, with greater confidence than the foundations upon which they build the same can well bear up. In some they are mere persuasions, of which they can scarcely render any reason, unless it be, that they think so, or at the best, that they would fain have it so; others give some grounds of their persuasion anent this thing, especially these five:

1. The exceeding riches and freedom of the grace and love of God which he hath days without number, and at sundry times and diverse manners, manifested to this poor church and nation, redeeming us many hundred years ago from the bondage of brutish ignorance, and heathenish idolatry; and again, about one hundred years since, from the bondage of popery; and lately, from the bondage of prelacy: and all these by a mighty hand and outstretched

arm, when we were not thinking of him, and were able to do nothing for ourselves.

2. The late blessed work of reformation, whereby God was pleased to bring us in a solemn public way in a sworn covenant with himself, and to establish amongst us the purity of his ordinances, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, and to own his work by the pouring forth of his Spirit, and many signal testimonies of his uplifted hand against the opposers, and for the friends thereof, which work must needs, in the persuasion of many, have a further progress amongst us ; because it is not his manner to lay a foundation and not to build upon it, to begin a work and not to bring it to perfection.

3. The many fervent and sincere prayers and supplications that have been put up to God, both by our forefathers, worthy men of God who lived in the preceding generation, and by many in this generation, in order to the Lord's continuing to dwell in our land, and making his work yet more glorious in these nations ; which prayers are yet before the throne, and in a great measure unanswered ; and it cannot be that the prayers of his people shall perish before Him who is the hearer of prayer.

4. That there is a precious remnant, and a holy seed of converted gracious souls in the land, and that as numerous, at this time, if not more numerous than at any time heretofore ; and how can God remove from that land, in which he hath so many sons and daughters ?

5. That there is a select choicest number of able and godly ministers, sowing the immortal seed of the word day by day, in all the quarters of the land ; which doth say that the Lord hath yet a work and harvest in Scotland. But from none of these singly, nor from more or all of them jointly, can we certainly draw any such conclusion, that God is not about to remove his tabernacle, and to depart from amongst us. All these things notwithstanding, he may come unto us quickly, and remove our candlestick out of its place ; yea, many things there be that are sad and threatening prog-

nostics, that the Lord purposeth so to do ; even all these to which I have already spoken, besides sundry others that I have not mentioned. And as to these five particulars, albeit I would be very loath to extenuate any of them, but do desire to stir up myself, and invite others unto a thankful acknowledgment and humble admiration of the exceeding riches of the goodness of God therein, and to improve the same so far as we are warranted of God unto the strengthening of ourselves in faith and in duty ; yet in order to the awakening us from our security, and putting us on to more wrestling with God, and more watchfulness, and tenderness, and diligence, and zeal in our duty, I desire it to be considered, 1. That there is no particular church upon earth, that hath a promise of God's dwelling and abiding with it for ever. The Church of Rome doth indeed pretend to it, but is found in all these pretences to be a liar and a deceiver ; and that whilst she would make the Christian world to believe that she is infallible, and built upon the rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, she is Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations in the earth. 2. That the covenant of God with particular visible churches, is conditional only : he promiseth that he will be with them whilst they are with him, (2 Chron. xv. 2, Exod. xix. 5, Deut. xxix. 9-13). And therefore, as he doth threaten to cast off particular churches, because of their barrenness, and backsliding, and breach of covenant, and disobedience, and rebellion (Deut. xxix. 18-21, Isa. v. 5-7, Hos. i. 6-9, Hos. ix. 17, Matt. xxi. 43, Rev. ii. 5) ; so hath he really and actually, because of these sins, cast off the most famous and flourishing particular churches that have been in the world, whom he did as eminently own, and for whom he did at sundry times, and in divers manners, as eminently appear in the effects of his power, and mercy, and grace, as ever he did own or appear for the Church of Scotland. Such as that famous Old Testament Church of Israel and Judah. That famous New Testament Church at Jerusalem, and sundry other of the famous Churches of Asia,

Africa, and Europe. The Apostle Paul, upon consideration of the holy severity of God in this matter, calleth upon us, "not to be high-minded, but to fear that if God spared not the natural branches, lest he also shall not spare us," (Rom. xi. 20-22). 3. That there have been solemn public national church covenants attended with eminent pieces of reformation in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, and with signal appearances of God, in more than ordinary works of providence, for countenancing and carrying on of the same; and that these have been extended to neighbour churches and nations to begin a reformation there also. And yet desolation and darkness have followed shortly upon the back of all these things. Such covenants, and reformations, and providences of God there were in Judah, in the days of these two good kings, Hezekiah and Josiah, which were also extended to many in Israel, as may be read (2 Chron. xxix. xxx. xxxi. xxxiv. xxxv. and 2 Kings xix), and yet we know what followed upon the back of these things, in the days of Manasseh (2 Kings xxi. 2 Chron xxxiii.), and in the days of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, kings of Judah, (2 Chron. xxxvi.) Yea, the Scriptures testify, that fiery trials and sad dispensations commonly do befall the church of God, upon the back of eminent mercies and blessings on his part, and great and solemn engagements and undertakings upon her part, the wisdom of God so dispensing, partly for the trial and proof of the faith and patience of such as are upright in their hearts, and partly for discovering of hypocrites, and punishing of those who deal falsely in his covenant. Such things befel to Israel in the wilderness, after their coming out of Egypt, and through the Red Sea, and the Lord's giving of the law, and covenanting with them at Mount Sinai, as may be read in the books of Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; and to the ten tribes after the days of David and of Solomon, and to the church of Judah in the days of Manasseh, Ammon, Jehoiakim, &c. as may be read in the books of the Kings and Chronicles. And such things came upon many of the

churches of Christ, not long after their first planting, and afterwards, as may be read in the Acts and writings of the apostles, and in the story of the church downward, unto our days. 4. That it is hard to determine how far the Lord answereth the prayers, and satisfieth the desires of his servants and people, in order to the state and condition of a particular visible church, and to the continuing of his gospel, and ordinances therein. They do oftentimes (no doubt) desire and pray, that the sun of righteousness may never go down upon the church whereof they are members, and that his ordinances may be continued therein till many generations, yea, till time shall be no more. And yet it cannot be said that the Lord satisfieth these desires, or answereth their prayers in that particular, as to such a length of time, because experience telleth us, that he doth oftentimes remove his candlestick from particular churches where his servants and people have prayed much to the contrary. Neither yet doth it follow, that they seek him in vain; because, as they are accepted of God, in being faithful in this piece of their duty, so doth he ordinarily grant much more as to the substance, even of the things which they do desire, than may abundantly witness the tender respect he hath, and the gracious recompence he doth allow, unto the travail of their souls in these particulars. The Lord hath already done so much in Scotland, as may justly be esteemed a bountiful return of all the prayers of his servants and people there, though they had been a thousand times more than they have been. 5. That as we must not measure the perfection of the works of God, by the line of our imagination and reason, but by his own holy purposes and ends, so the great work which God mainly intendeth in his appearances in visible churches, and which he accomplisheth and bringeth to perfection, is not such a pitch and continuance of the purity of ordinances and outward reformation, but the gathering of his saints, and the perfecting of the invisible body of Christ. Unto this all his dispensations in the ordinances and outward adminis-

trations are subordinated, and so proportioned, for measure and length of time, as may bring forth this great end. And when this is done, I mean, when the whole number of select chosen ones, whom the Lord meaneth effectually to call in a land, are gathered home to himself, then commonly he taketh down his tabernacle, and is gone, as having done his great business for which he sent his gospel amongst a people. And, therefore, though he should be quickly gone from amongst us, we cannot justly say, that he hath laid a foundation, and not built upon it, or that he hath begun a work, and not brought it to perfection, seeing we do not know but that he hath accomplished, or is near about to accomplish, his own holy purposes and ends, and dispensing such a measure and length of ordinances, and outward administrations for that effect. 6. That the Lord sometimes sendeth forth not a few burning lights, and gathereth not a few souls unto himself, immediately before his departing from a land, as the sun sometimes shineth brightly, and maketh a clear and warm evening, immediately before the setting and going down thereof. A company of able and faithful ministers, and a harvest of saints, are indeed sometimes the evidences of the "day-spring visiting from on high, and of the sun of righteousness going forth as a bridegroom from his chamber, and rejoicing as a strong man to run his race." But sometimes they are as the tokens of his last farewell. So it was amongst the Jews in the days of the apostles. The Lord sent amongst them many of his servants to preach the gospel unto them, and many thousands of them were converted and did believe (Acts xxi. 20); and yet within a few years thereafter, "he did finish his work and cut it short in righteousness" amongst that people, as the apostle speaketh, (Rom. ix. 28). 7. That the Lord, though he do not utterly remove a church's candlestick, but hath in it a remnant both of a faithful ministry and of saints; yet he doth sometimes visit with very darkening, and ruining, and desolating dispensations for many years together. So he did

unto the church of Israel, in the younger years of Samuel the prophet, by "forsaking the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which he placed among men; and delivering his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand," (Psa. lxxviii. 60, 61). And unto the church of Judah, in the days of the prophet Jeremiah, by "bringing upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword, in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man or him that stooped for age; the Lord gave them all into his hand. And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon. And they burnt the house of God, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the places thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof. And them that had escaped from the sword, carried he away to Babylon, where they were servants to him and his sons, until the reign of the kingdom of Persia," (2 Chron. xxxvi. 17-21). And this did God also to most of the churches in Europe, for some hundreds of years together under popery, before Luther's time. And thus also hath he done to most of the churches of Asia and Africa, under the Turk and other Mahometan princes. And thus he did unto the church of England not long ago, after the death of Edward the Sixth, during the reign of Queen Mary. And do not his present dispensations, in a great measure, speak that he meaneth thus to do unto us also? 8. We shall not find many instances (if any) of visible churches enjoying the ordinances for any long time together in purity and peace. Such is the mixture and leaven of hypocrisy and corruption that is within, and the fire of enmity and malice that is without, that it is a rare thing for a church for one complete century of years together, either not to be infected with heresy and error, or not to be trodden down of persecution. The church of the Jews, which was one of the most permanent and longest-lived, as continuing from

Abraham till some years after the death of Christ, yet what a various lot did she run, almost in every generation, sometimes by the spirit of error, and sometimes by the spirit of persecution, and sometimes by both at once? These things being duly considered, and it being thereunto added, that Scotland hath now for a long time enjoyed the light and liberty of the gospel; and that notwithstanding of all the goodness of God, in sending and continuing it amongst us, and of all our engagements to reform our ways, and to walk answerably unto the same,—yet our ignorance, and barrenness, and looseness, is great exceedingly, and our backslidings and provocations are many—is there not much cause to fear that our sun may be near the setting, and a night of darkness and desolation at our door, by the Lord's removing of our candlestick; at least, by sending a black and sad eclipse for a time, especially, there being such sad prognostics and threatenings for tokens of it?

JAMES GUTHRIE.



